THE RAMAYANA

YUDDHA KAND

The *Ramayana* is one of the great epics of the world. The story of Rama and Sita is a timeless tale of heroism, courage, love and loyalty; of human emotions and faults that lead to tragic consequences; and of the triumph of good over evil. An inseparable part of our heritage, the Ramayana provides vital clues about India's ancient history and culture.

Composed by Rishi Valmiki in Sanskrit verse more than 5000 years ago, it has touched everyone who heard it. There are versions of the story in almost every Indian language, there are dance, drama and puppet theatre versions, and paintings and sculptures depicting scenes from the Ramayana in every state. Ramayana songs, composed by great devotees, occupy a special place in classical and folk music. The story was carried all over Asia and unique versions are found in countries like Tibet, China, Japan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia (Bali) and the Philippines.

The *Amar Chitra Katha* retelling is based on Valmiki's original epic, which is composed of seven kands, or books, comprising 645 chapters.

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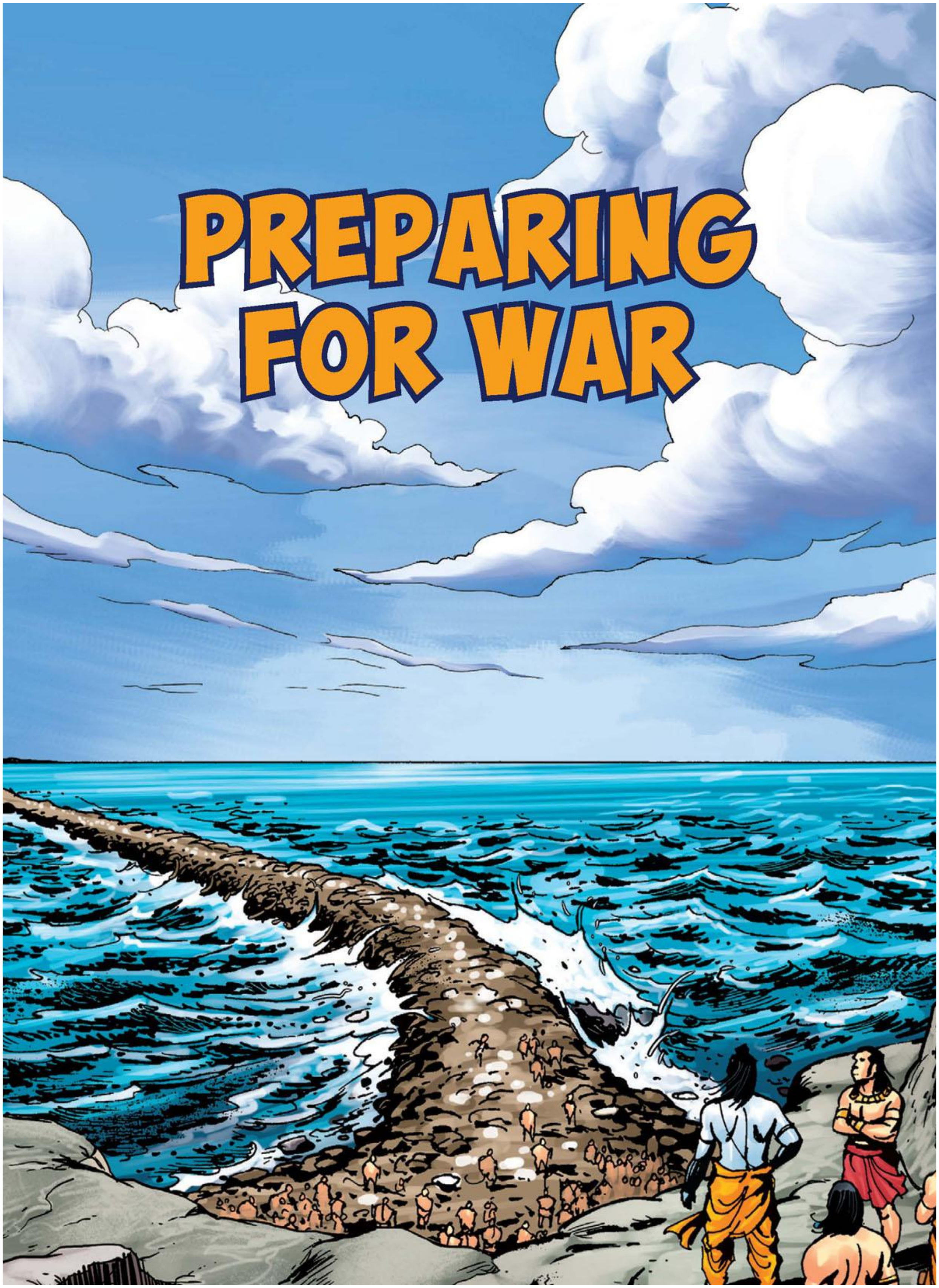
Acknowledgment

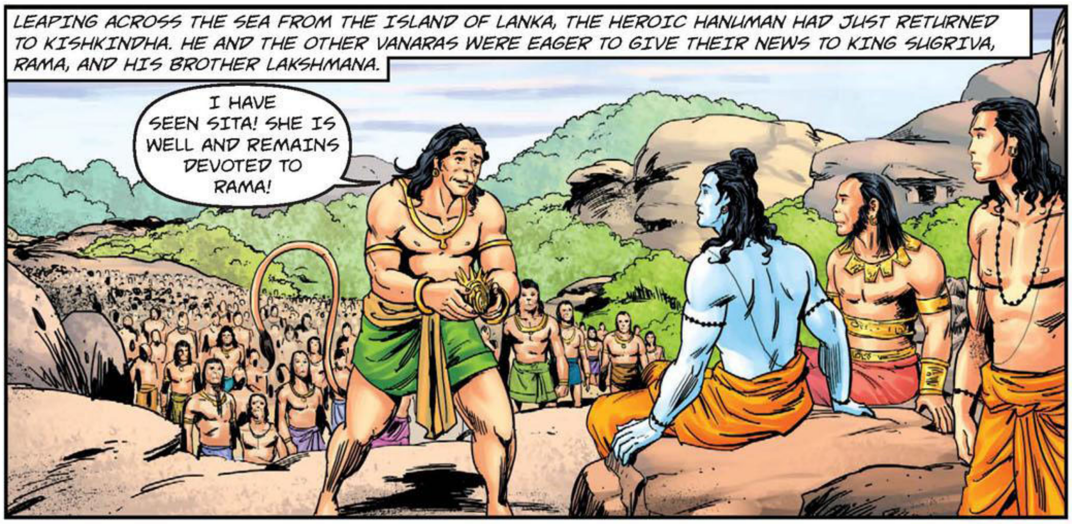
The main translations used in this retelling are:
1. Srimad Valmiki Ramayana in 3 vols. (With Sanskrit text and English translation), Gita Press, Gorakhpur, India, 4th edition, 1995.
2. Online translation by the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupathi, hosted by IIT Kanpur: http://valmiki.iitk.ac.in/index.php?id=translation
3. Online translation by Sri Desiraju Hanumanta Rao and Sri K.M.K. Murthy: http://www.valmikiramayan.net/index.html

The writer wishes to acknowledge the help of her mother, Mrs Ranga Gopalswami, in clarifying many points during the writing of the script.

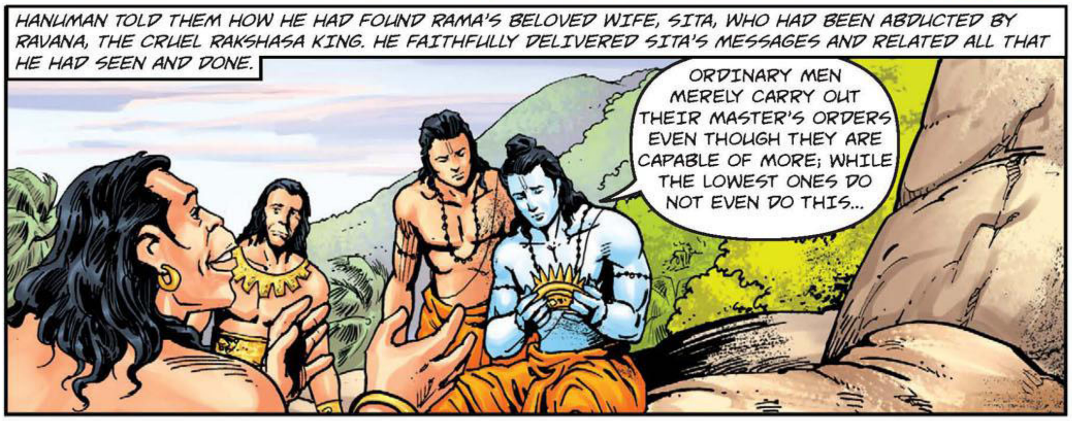
PREPARING FOR WAR

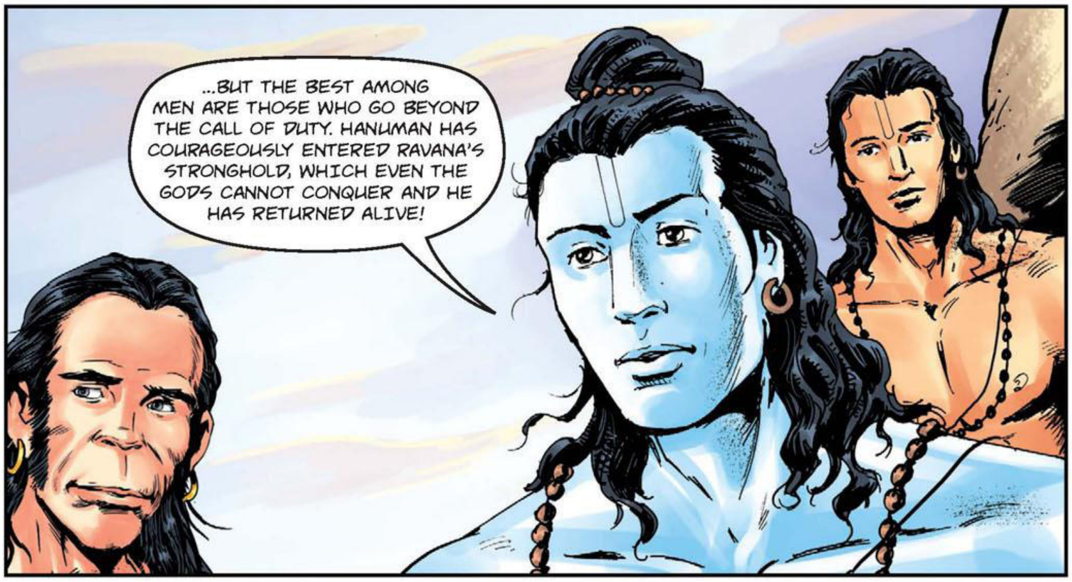


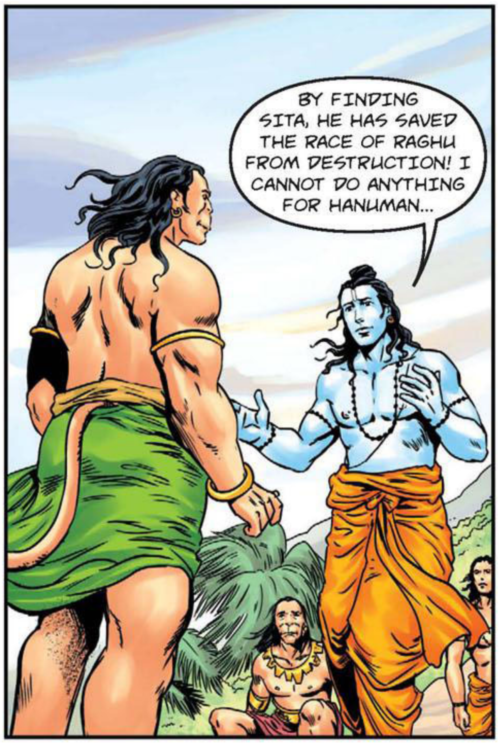
LEAPING ACROSS THE SEA FROM THE ISLAND OF LANKA, THE HEROIC HANUMAN HAD JUST RETURNED TO KISHKINDHA. HE AND THE OTHER VANARAS WERE EAGER TO GIVE THEIR NEWS TO KING SUGRIVA, RAMA, AND HIS BROTHER LAKSHMANA.

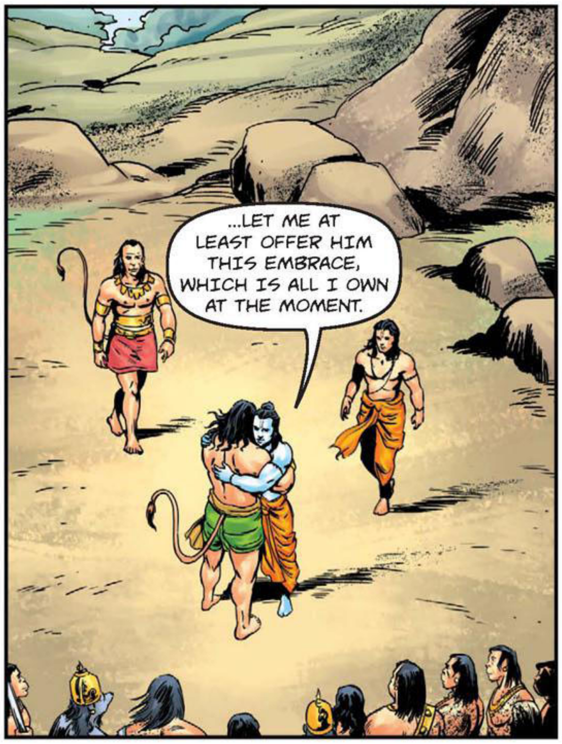

I HAVE SEEN SITA! SHE IS WELL AND REMAINS DEVOTED TO RAMA!

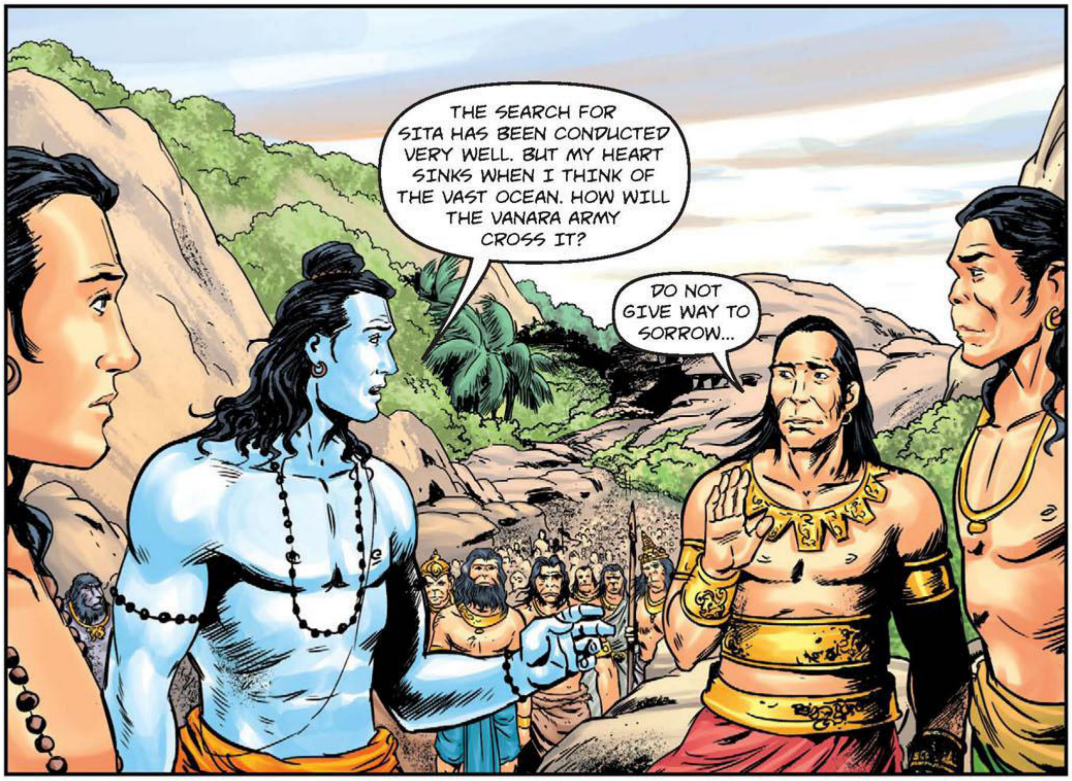
HANUMAN TOLD THEM HOW HE HAD FOUND RAMA'S BELOVED WIFE, SITA, WHO HAD BEEN ABDUCTED BY RAVANA, THE CRUEL RAKSHASA KING. HE FAITHFULLY DELIVERED SITA'S MESSAGES AND RELATED ALL THAT HE HAD SEEN AND DONE.

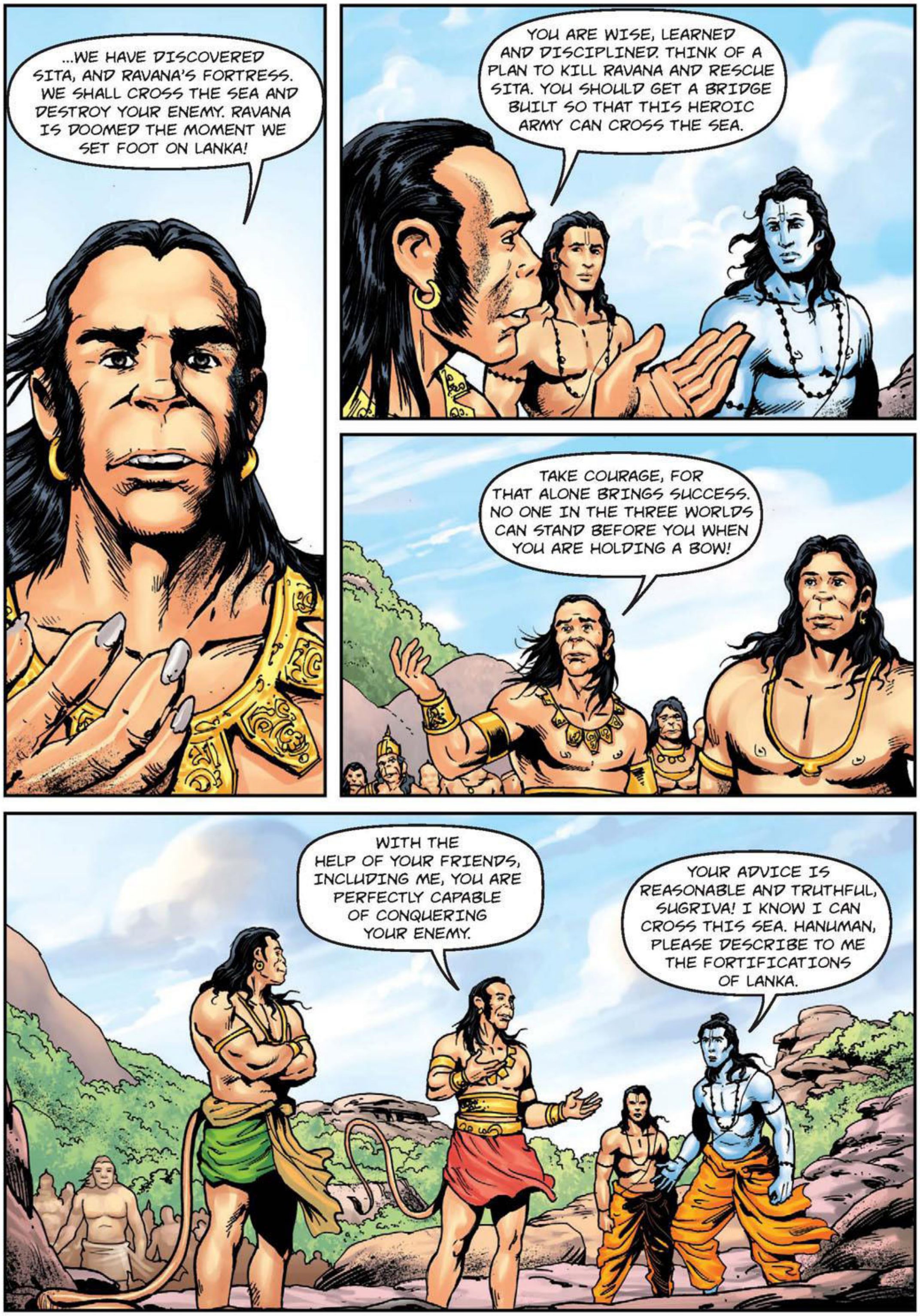

ORDINARY MEN MERELY CARRY OUT THEIR MASTER'S ORDERS EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE CAPABLE OF MORE; WHILE THE LOWEST ONES DO NOT EVEN DO THIS...

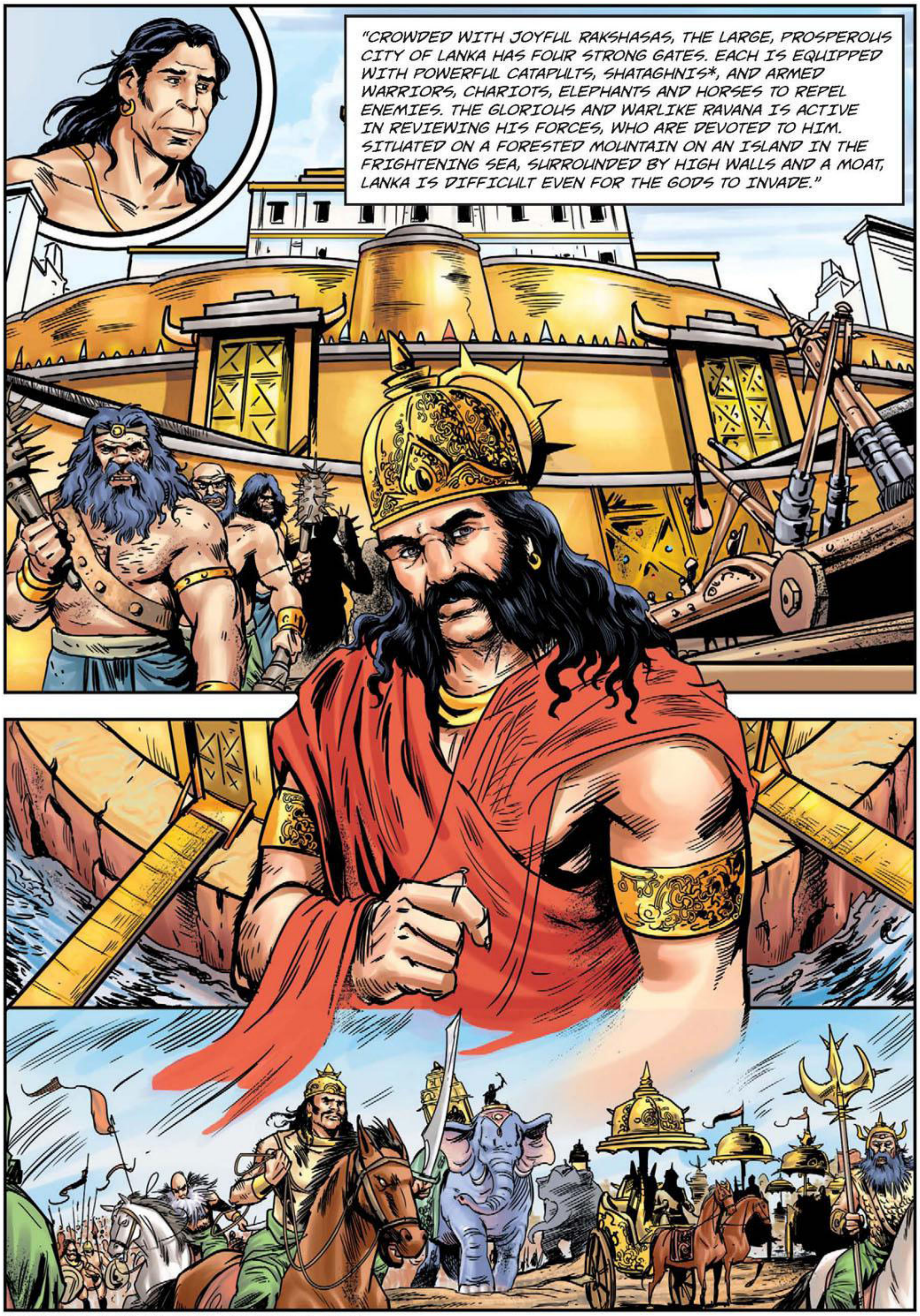

...BUT THE BEST AMONG MEN ARE THOSE WHO GO BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY. HANUMAN HAS COURAGEOUSLY ENTERED RAVANA'S STRONGHOLD, WHICH EVEN THE GODS CANNOT CONQUER AND HE HAS RETURNED ALIVE!


BY FINDING SITA, HE HAS SAVED THE RACE OF RAGHU FROM DESTRUCTION! I CANNOT DO ANYTHING FOR HANUMAN...

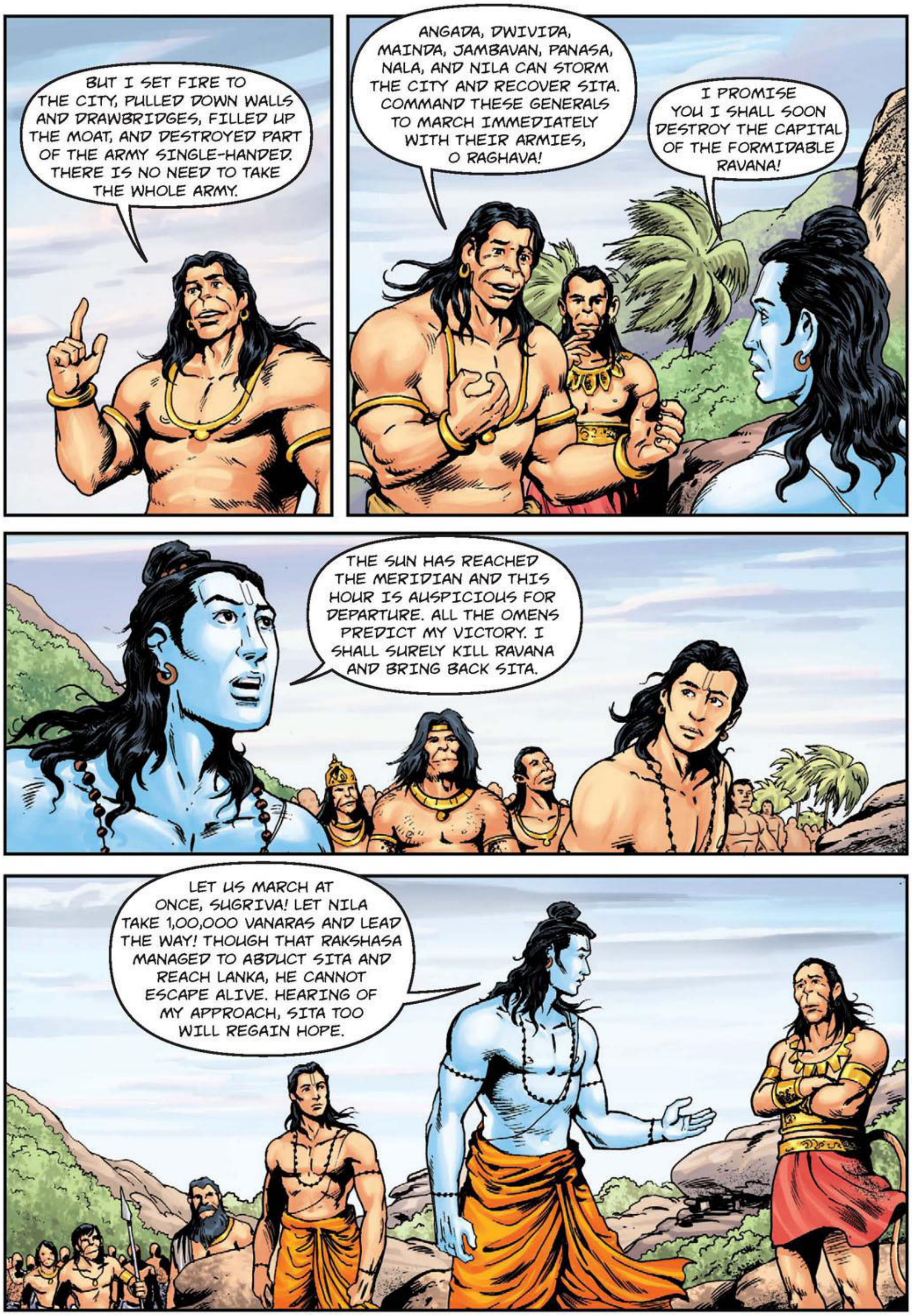

...LET ME AT LEAST OFFER HIM THIS EMBRACE, WHICH IS ALL I OWN AT THE MOMENT.

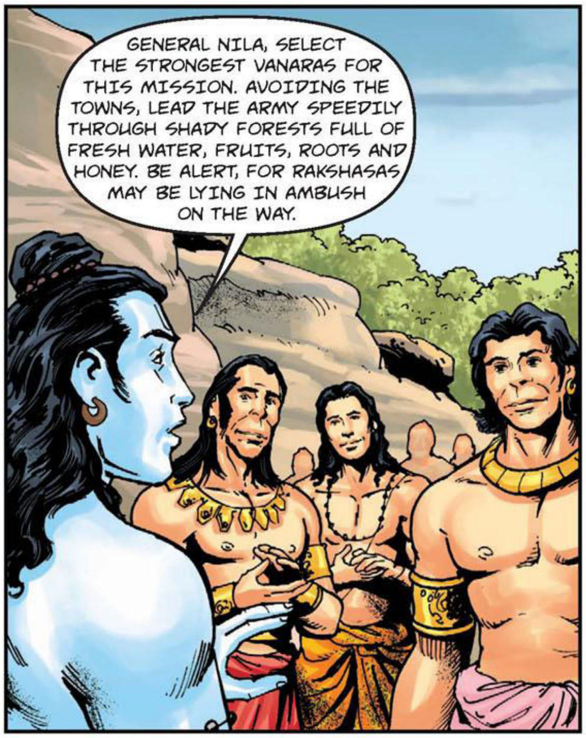

THE SEARCH FOR SITA HAS BEEN CONDUCTED VERY WELL. BUT MY HEART SINKS WHEN I THINK OF THE VAST OCEAN. HOW WILL THE VANARA ARMY CROSS IT?
DO NOT GIVE WAY TO SORROW...

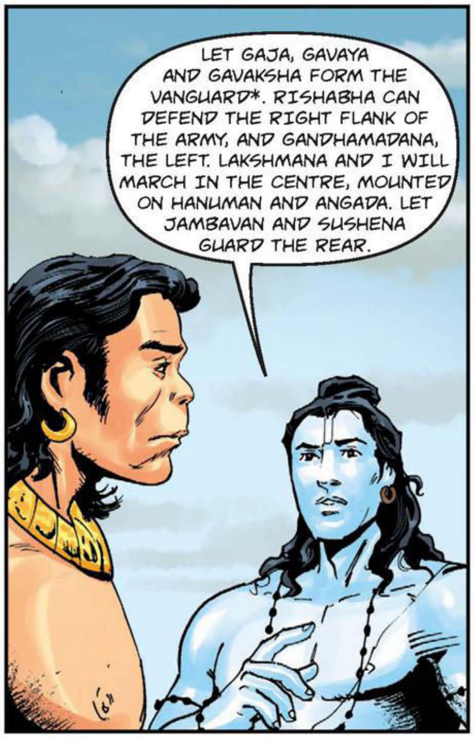

...WE HAVE DISCOVERED SITA, AND RAVANA'S FORTRESS. WE SHALL CROSS THE SEA AND DESTROY YOUR ENEMY. RAVANA IS DOOMED THE MOMENT WE SET FOOT ON LANKA!
YOU ARE WISE, LEARNED AND DISCIPLINED. THINK OF A PLAN TO KILL RAVANA AND RESCUE SITA. YOU SHOULD GET A BRIDGE BUILT SO THAT THIS HEROIC ARMY CAN CROSS THE SEA.
TAKE COURAGE, FOR THAT ALONE BRINGS SUCCESS. NO ONE IN THE THREE WORLDS CAN STAND BEFORE YOU WHEN YOU ARE HOLDING A BOW!
WITH THE HELP OF YOUR FRIENDS, INCLUDING ME, YOU ARE PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF CONQUERING YOUR ENEMY.
YOUR ADVICE IS REASONABLE AND TRUTHFUL, SUGRIVA! I KNOW I CAN CROSS THIS SEA. HANUMAN, PLEASE DESCRIBE TO ME THE FORTIFICATIONS OF LANKA.

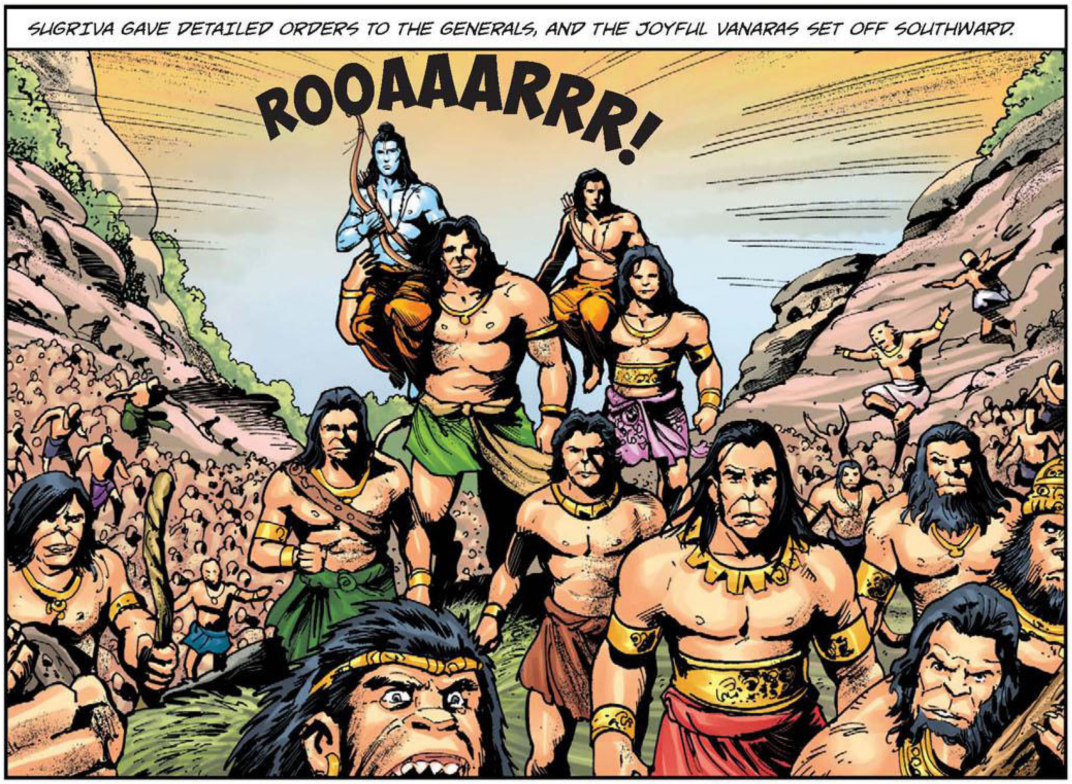

"CROWDED WITH JOYFUL RAKSHASAS, THE LARGE, PROSPEROUS CITY OF LANKA HAS FOUR STRONG GATES. EACH IS EQUIPPED WITH POWERFUL CATAPULTS, SHATAGHNIS*, AND ARMED WARRIORS, CHARIOTS, ELEPHANTS AND HORSES TO REPEL ENEMIES. THE GLORIOUS AND WARLIKE RAVANA IS ACTIVE IN REVIEWING HIS FORCES, WHO ARE DEVOTED TO HIM. SITUATED ON A FORESTED MOUNTAIN ON AN ISLAND IN THE FRIGHTENING SEA, SURROUNDED BY HIGH WALLS AND A MOAT, LANKA IS DIFFICULT EVEN FOR THE GODS TO INVADE."

*SHATAGHNI IS A LARGE CLUB WITH IRON SPIKES, SUPPOSED TO KILL HUNDREDS OF ENEMIES WITH ONE BLOW.

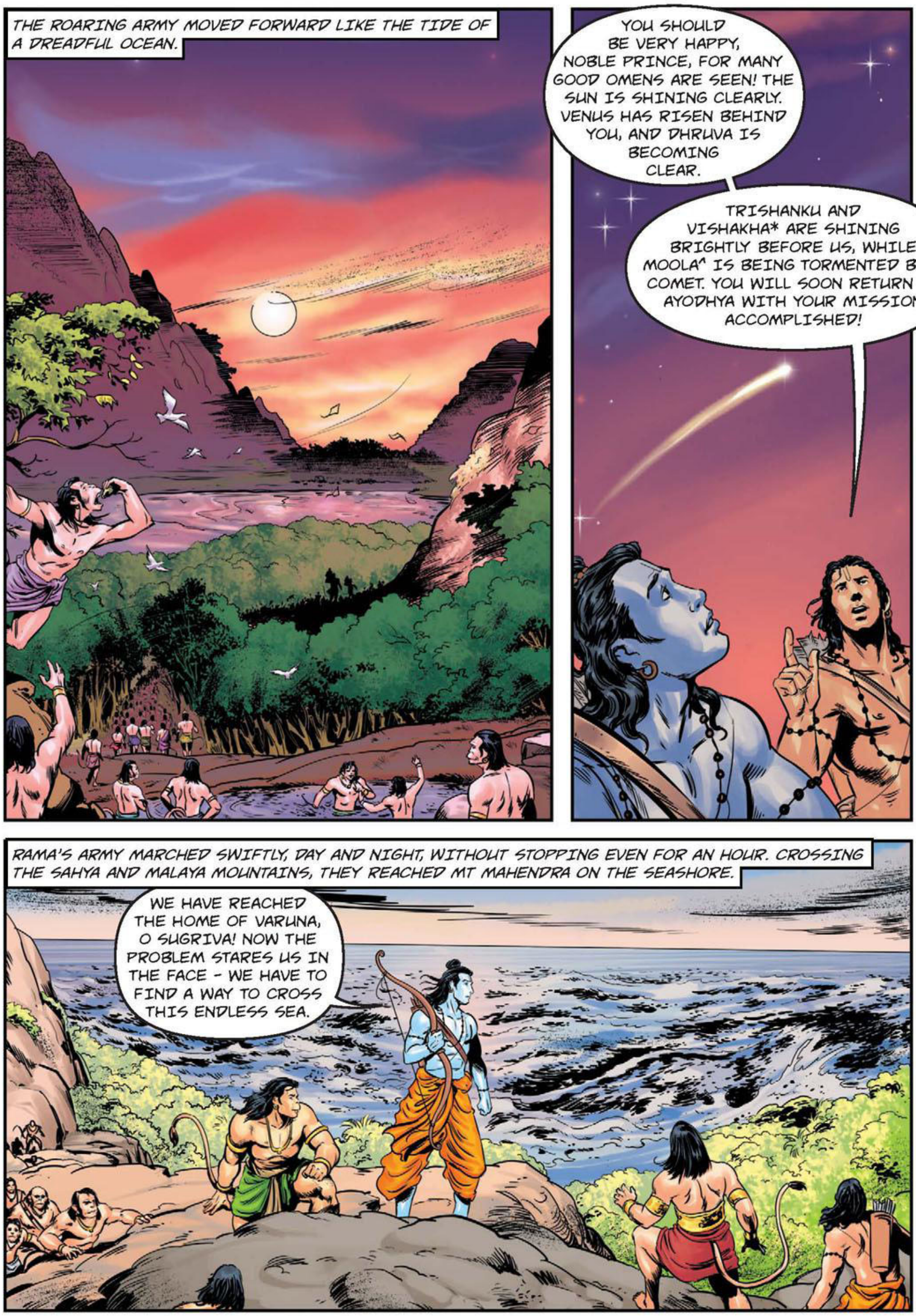

BUT I SET FIRE TO THE CITY, PULLED DOWN WALLS AND DRAWBRIDGES, FILLED UP THE MOAT, AND DESTROYED PART OF THE ARMY SINGLE-HANDED. THERE IS NO NEED TO TAKE THE WHOLE ARMY.
ANGADA, DWIVIDA, MAINDA, JAMBAVAN, PANASA, NALA, AND NILA CAN STORM THE CITY AND RECOVER SITA. COMMAND THESE GENERALS TO MARCH IMMEDIATELY WITH THEIR ARMIES, O RAGHAVA!
I PROMISE YOU I SHALL SOON DESTROY THE CAPITAL OF THE FORMIDABLE RAVANA!
THE SUN HAS REACHED THE MERIDIAN AND THIS HOUR IS AUSPICIOUS FOR DEPARTURE. ALL THE OMENS PREDICT MY VICTORY. I SHALL SURELY KILL RAVANA AND BRING BACK SITA.
LET US MARCH AT ONCE, SUGRIVA! LET NILA TAKE 1,00,000 VANARAS AND LEAD THE WAY! THOUGH THAT RAKSHASA MANAGED TO ABDUCT SITA AND REACH LANKA, HE CANNOT ESCAPE ALIVE. HEARING OF MY APPROACH, SITA TOO WILL REGAIN HOPE.


GENERAL NILA, SELECT THE STRONGEST VANARAS FOR THIS MISSION. AVOIDING THE TOWNS, LEAD THE ARMY SPEEDILY THROUGH SHADY FORESTS FULL OF FRESH WATER, FRUITS, ROOTS AND HONEY. BE ALERT, FOR RAKSHASAS MAY BE LYING IN AMBUSH ON THE WAY.

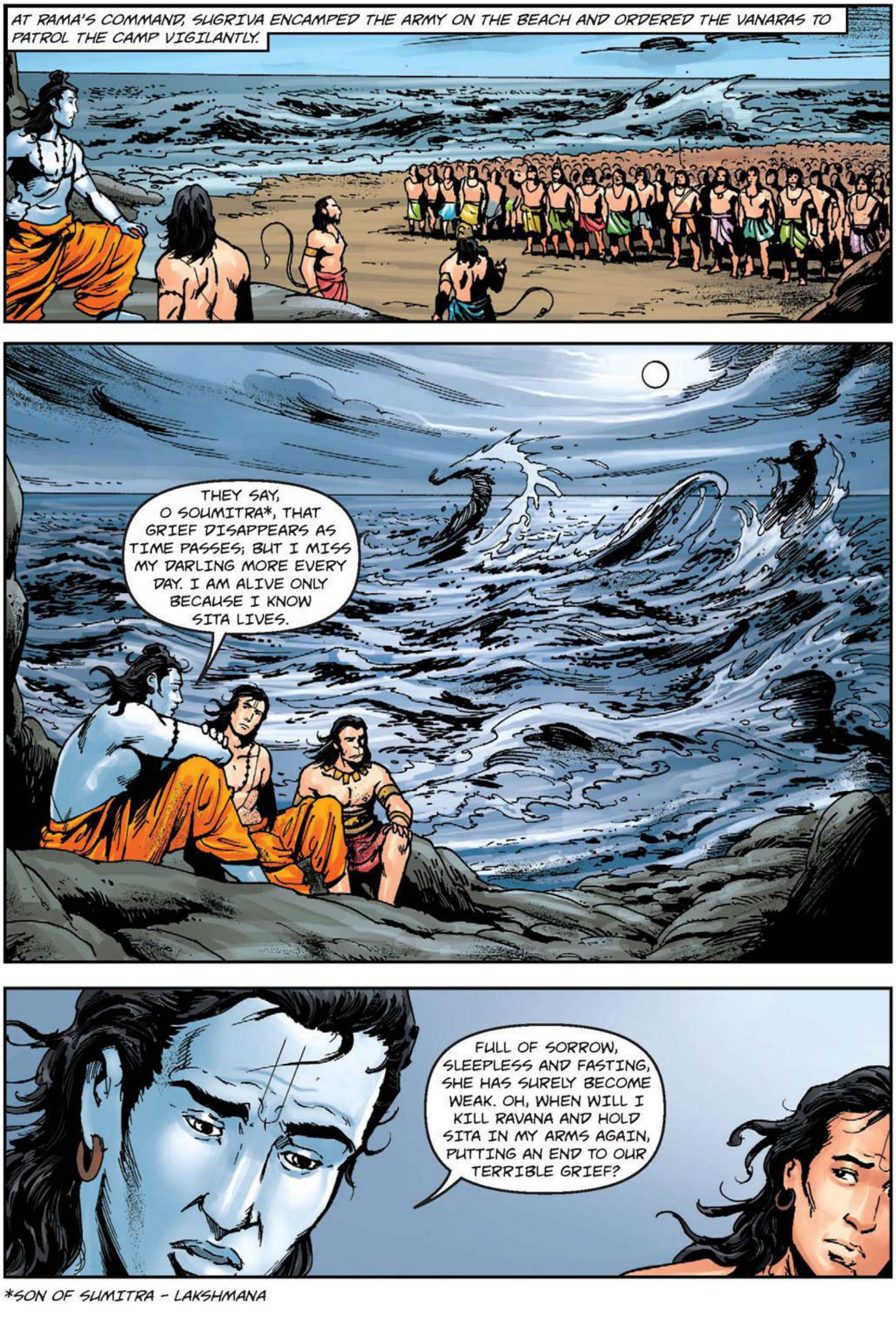

LET GAJA, GAVAYA AND GAVAKSHA FORM THE VANGUARD*. RISHABHA CAN DEFEND THE RIGHT FLANK OF THE ARMY, AND GANDHAMADANA, THE LEFT. LAKSHMANA AND I WILL MARCH IN THE CENTRE, MOUNTED ON HANUMAN AND ANGADA. LET JAMBAVAN AND SUSHENA GUARD THE REAR.


SUGRIVA GAVE DETAILED ORDERS TO THE GENERALS, AND THE JOYFUL VANARAS SET OFF SOUTHWARD.
ROOAAARRR!

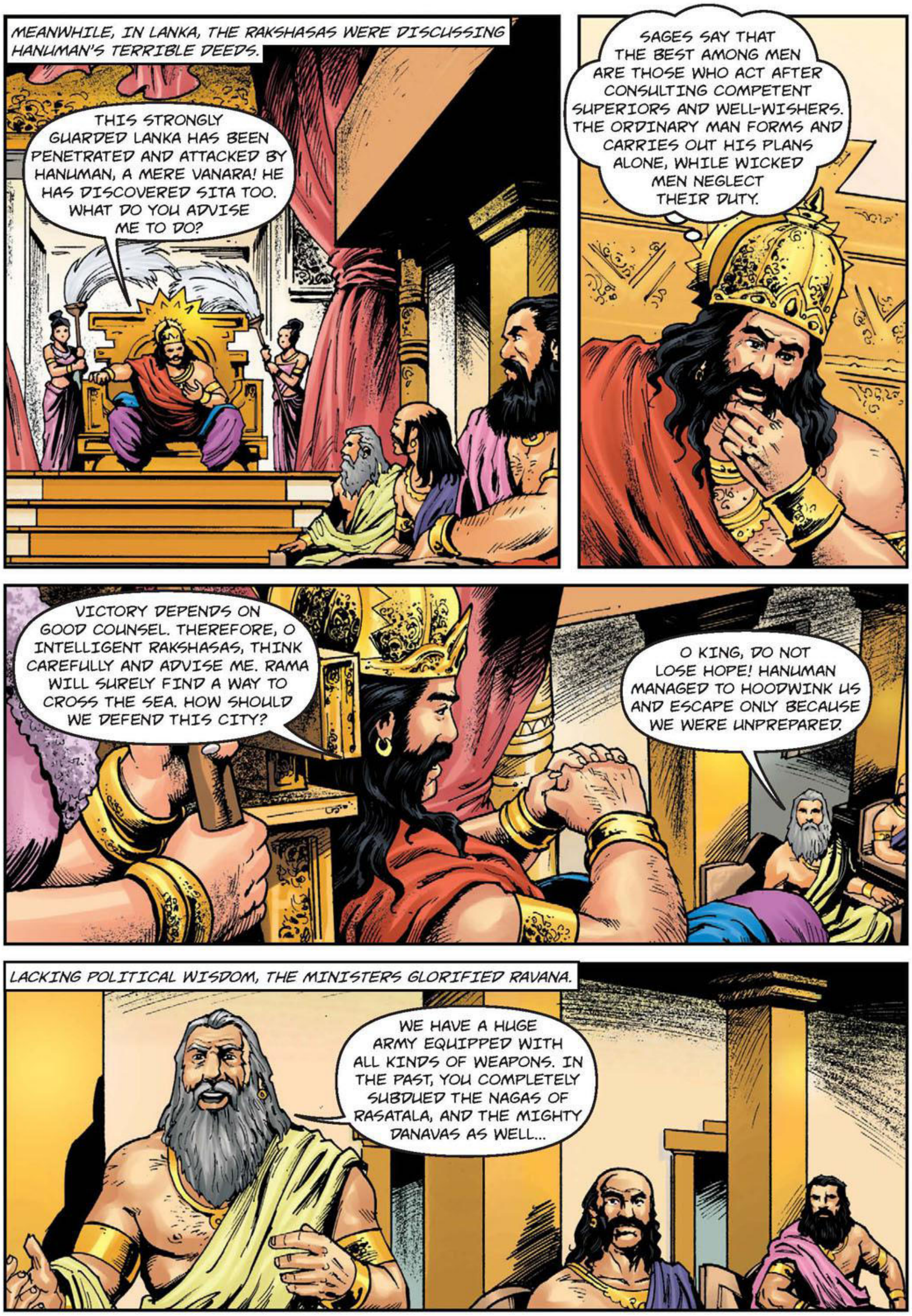
*FRONT

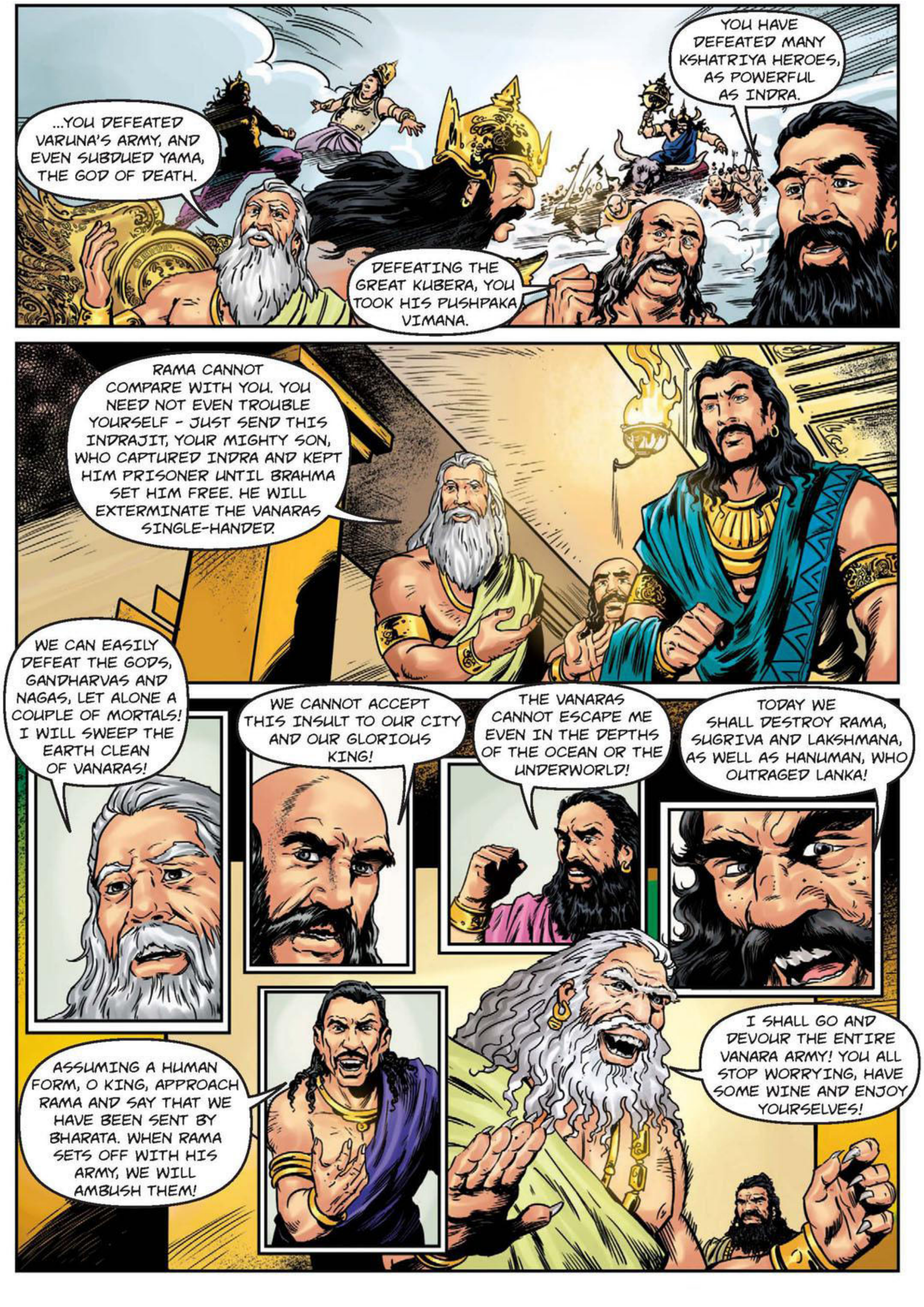

THE ROARING ARMY MOVED FORWARD LIKE THE TIDE OF A DREADFUL OCEAN.
YOU SHOULD BE VERY HAPPY, NOBLE PRINCE, FOR MANY GOOD OMENS ARE SEEN! THE SUN IS SHINING CLEARLY. VENUS HAS RISEN BEHIND YOU, AND DHRUVA IS BECOMING CLEAR.
TRISHANKU AND VISHAKHA* ARE SHINING BRIGHTLY BEFORE US, WHILE MOOLA^ IS BEING TORMENTED BY A COMET. YOU WILL SOON RETURN TO AYODHYA WITH YOUR MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!
RAMA'S ARMY MARCHED SWIFTLY, DAY AND NIGHT, WITHOUT STOPPING EVEN FOR AN HOUR. CROSSING THE SAHYA AND MALAYA MOUNTAINS, THEY REACHED MT MAHENDRA ON THE SEASHORE.
WE HAVE REACHED THE HOME OF VARUNA, O SUGRIVA! NOW THE PROBLEM STARES US IN THE FACE - WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO CROSS THIS ENDLESS SEA.

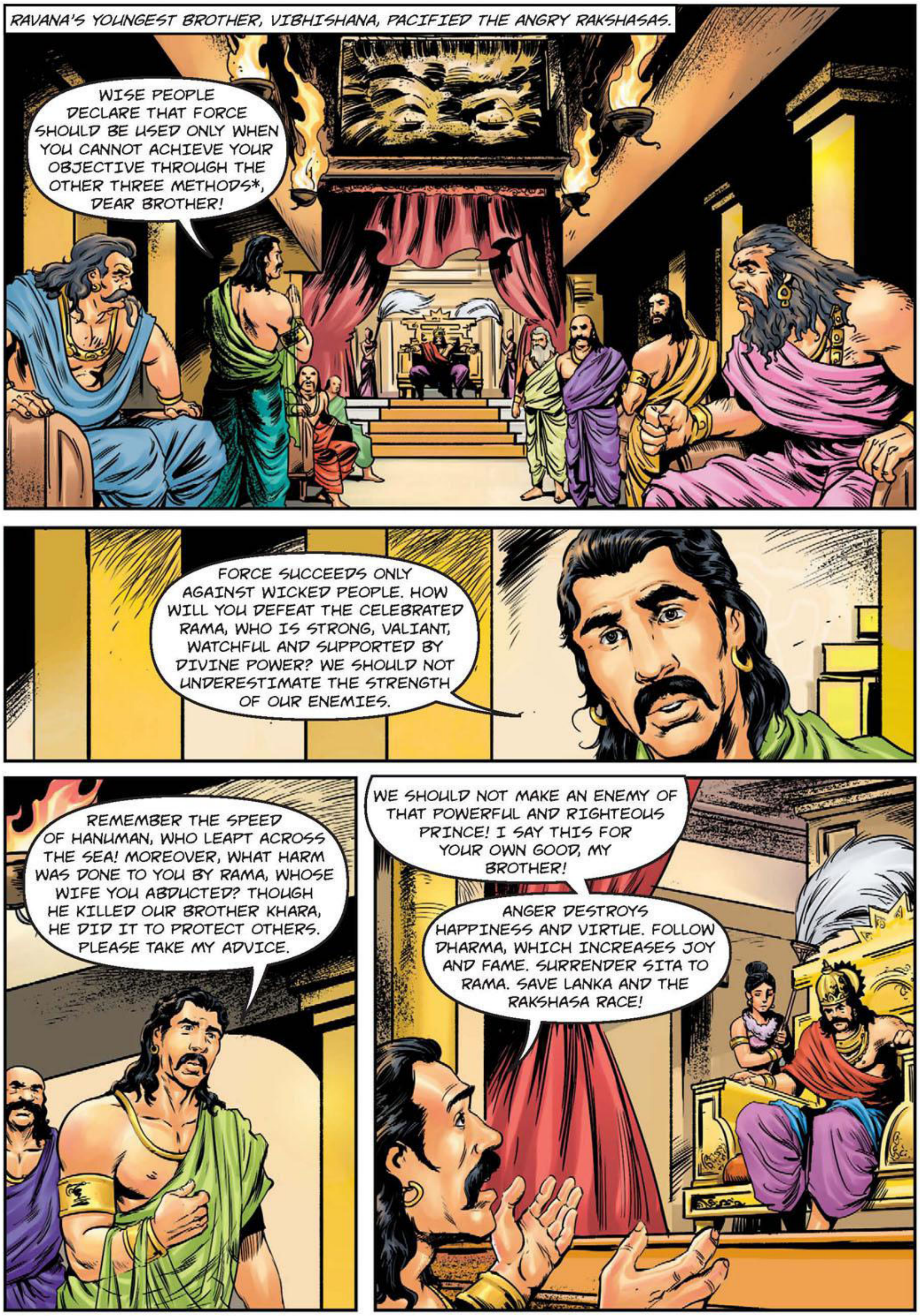
STARS CONNECTED WITH *THE IKSHVAKU DYNASTY, AND ^THE RAKSHASAS


AT RAMA'S COMMAND, SUGRIVA ENCAMPED THE ARMY ON THE BEACH AND ORDERED THE VANARAS TO PATROL THE CAMP VIGILANTLY.
THEY SAY, O SOUMITRA*, THAT GRIEF DISAPPEARS AS TIME PASSES; BUT I MISS MY DARLING MORE EVERY DAY. I AM ALIVE ONLY BECAUSE I KNOW SITA LIVES.
FULL OF SORROW, SLEEPLESS AND FASTING, SHE HAS SURELY BECOME WEAK. OH, WHEN WILL I KILL RAVANA AND HOLD SITA IN MY ARMS AGAIN, PUTTING AN END TO OUR TERRIBLE GRIEF?

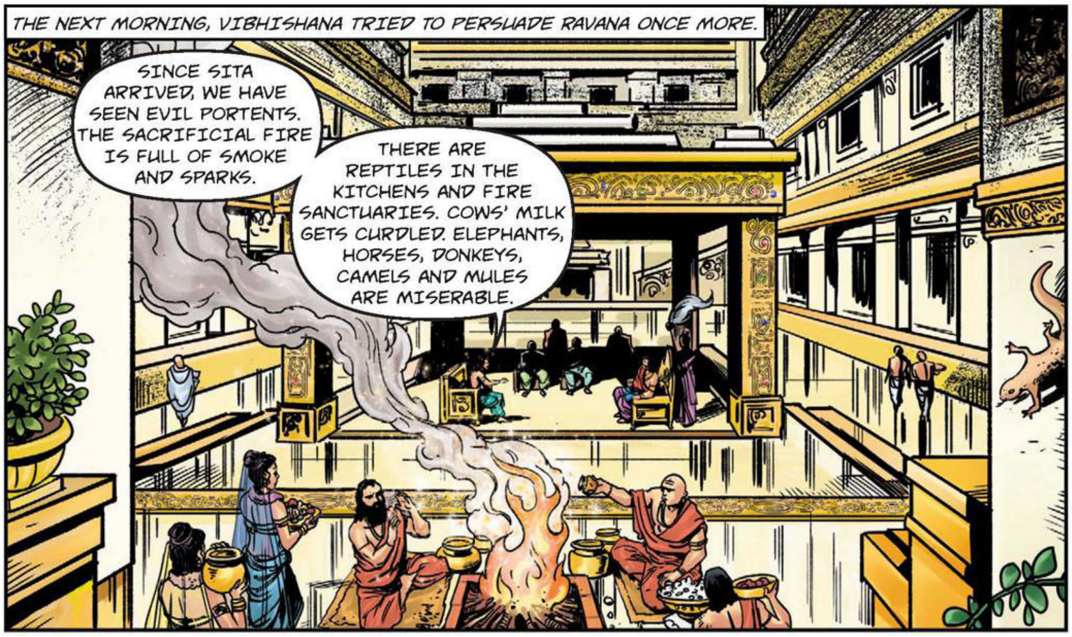
*SON OF SUMITRA - LAKSHMANA

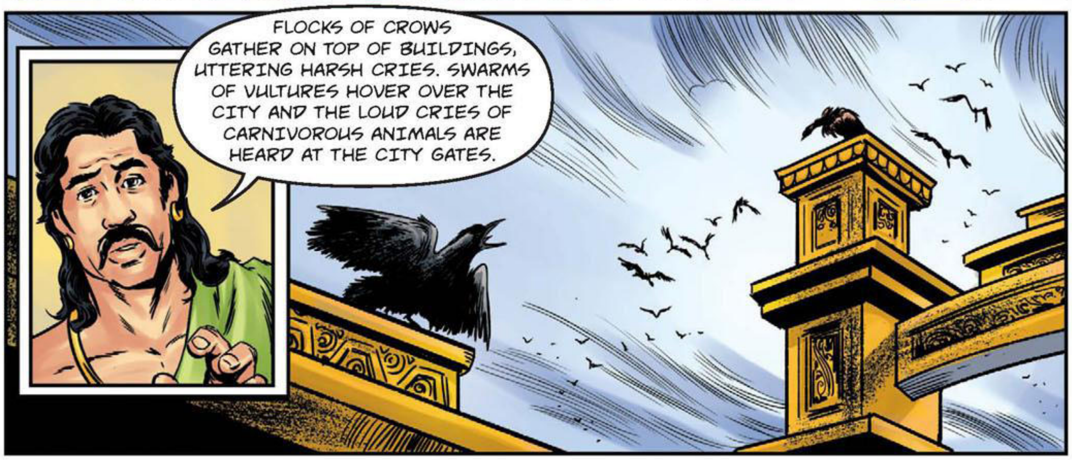

MEANWHILE, IN LANKA, THE RAKSHASAS WERE DISCUSSING HANUMAN'S TERRIBLE DEEDS.
THIS STRONGLY GUARDED LANKA HAS BEEN PENETRATED AND ATTACKED BY HANUMAN, A MERE VANARA! HE HAS DISCOVERED SITA TOO. WHAT DO YOU ADVISE ME TO DO?
SAGES SAY THAT THE BEST AMONG MEN ARE THOSE WHO ACT AFTER CONSULTING COMPETENT SUPERIORS AND WELL-WISHERS. THE ORDINARY MAN FORMS AND CARRIES OUT HIS PLANS ALONE, WHILE WICKED MEN NEGLECT THEIR DUTY.
VICTORY DEPENDS ON GOOD COUNSEL. THEREFORE, O INTELLIGENT RAKSHASAS, THINK CAREFULLY AND ADVISE ME. RAMA WILL SURELY FIND A WAY TO CROSS THE SEA. HOW SHOULD WE DEFEND THIS CITY?
O KING, DO NOT LOSE HOPE! HANUMAN MANAGED TO HOODWINK US AND ESCAPE ONLY BECAUSE WE WERE UNPREPARED.
LACKING POLITICAL WISDOM, THE MINISTERS GLORIFIED RAVANA.
WE HAVE A HUGE ARMY EQUIPPED WITH ALL KINDS OF WEAPONS. IN THE PAST, YOU COMPLETELY SUBDUED THE NAGAS OF RASATALA, AND THE MIGHTY DANAVAS AS WELL...

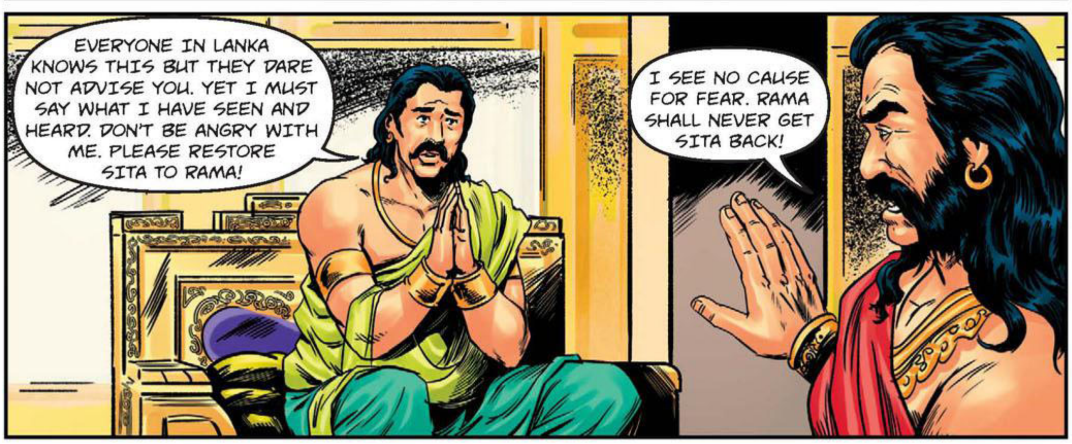

...YOU DEFEATED VARUNA'S ARMY, AND EVEN SUBDUED YAMA, THE GOD OF DEATH.
DEFEATING THE GREAT KUBERA, YOU TOOK HIS PUSHPAKA VIMANA.
YOU HAVE DEFEATED MANY KSHATRIYA HEROES, AS POWERFUL AS INDRA.
RAMA CANNOT COMPARE WITH YOU. YOU NEED NOT EVEN TROUBLE YOURSELF - JUST SEND THIS INDRAJIT, YOUR MIGHTY SON, WHO CAPTURED INDRA AND KEPT HIM PRISONER UNTIL BRAHMA SET HIM FREE. HE WILL EXTERMINATE THE VANARAS SINGLE-HANDED.
WE CAN EASILY DEFEAT THE GODS, GANDHARVAS AND NAGAS, LET ALONE A COUPLE OF MORTALS! I WILL SWEEP THE EARTH CLEAN OF VANARAS!
WE CANNOT ACCEPT THIS INSULT TO OUR CITY AND OUR GLORIOUS KING!
THE VANARAS CANNOT ESCAPE ME EVEN IN THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN OR THE UNDERWORLD!
TODAY WE SHALL DESTROY RAMA, SUGRIVA AND LAKSHMANA, AS WELL AS HANUMAN, WHO OUTRAGED LANKA!
ASSUMING A HUMAN FORM, O KING, APPROACH RAMA AND SAY THAT WE HAVE BEEN SENT BY BHARATA. WHEN RAMA SETS OFF WITH HIS ARMY, WE WILL AMBUSH THEM!
I SHALL GO AND DEVOUR THE ENTIRE VANARA ARMY! YOU ALL STOP WORRYING, HAVE SOME WINE AND ENJOY YOURSELVES!

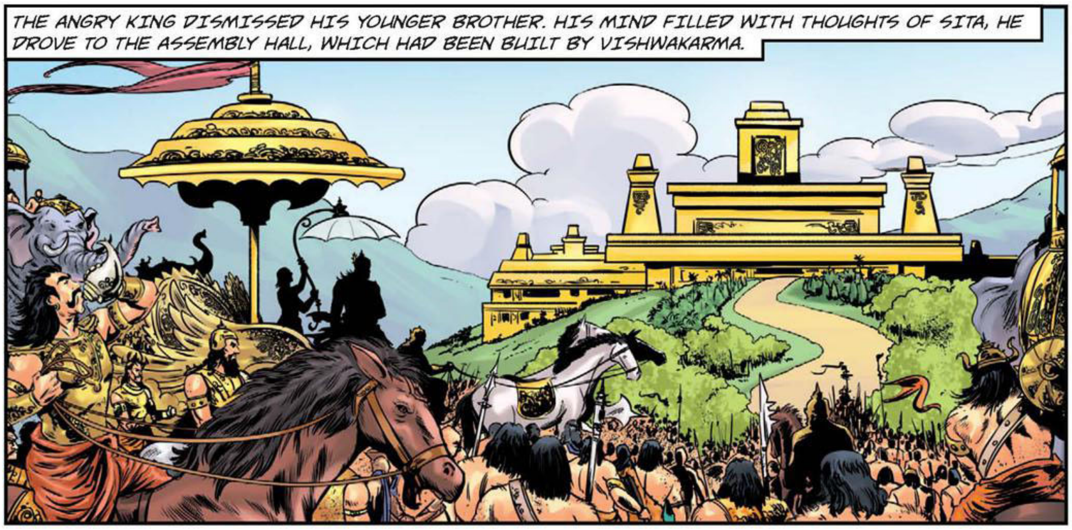

RAVANA'S YOUNGEST BROTHER, VIBHISHANA, PACIFIED THE ANGRY RAKSHASAS.
WISE PEOPLE DECLARE THAT FORCE SHOULD BE USED ONLY WHEN YOU CANNOT ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVE THROUGH THE OTHER THREE METHODS*, DEAR BROTHER!
FORCE SUCCEEDS ONLY AGAINST WICKED PEOPLE. HOW WILL YOU DEFEAT THE CELEBRATED RAMA, WHO IS STRONG, VALIANT, WATCHFUL AND SUPPORTED BY DIVINE POWER? WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE STRENGTH OF OUR ENEMIES.
REMEMBER THE SPEED OF HANUMAN, WHO LEAPT ACROSS THE SEA! MOREOVER, WHAT HARM WAS DONE TO YOU BY RAMA, WHOSE WIFE YOU ABDUCTED? THOUGH HE KILLED OUR BROTHER KHARA, HE DID IT TO PROTECT OTHERS. PLEASE TAKE MY ADVICE.
WE SHOULD NOT MAKE AN ENEMY OF THAT POWERFUL AND RIGHTEOUS PRINCE! I SAY THIS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, MY BROTHER!
ANGER DESTROYS HAPPINESS AND VIRTUE. FOLLOW DHARMA, WHICH INCREASES JOY AND FAME. SURRENDER SITA TO RAMA. SAVE LANKA AND THE RAKSHASA RACE!

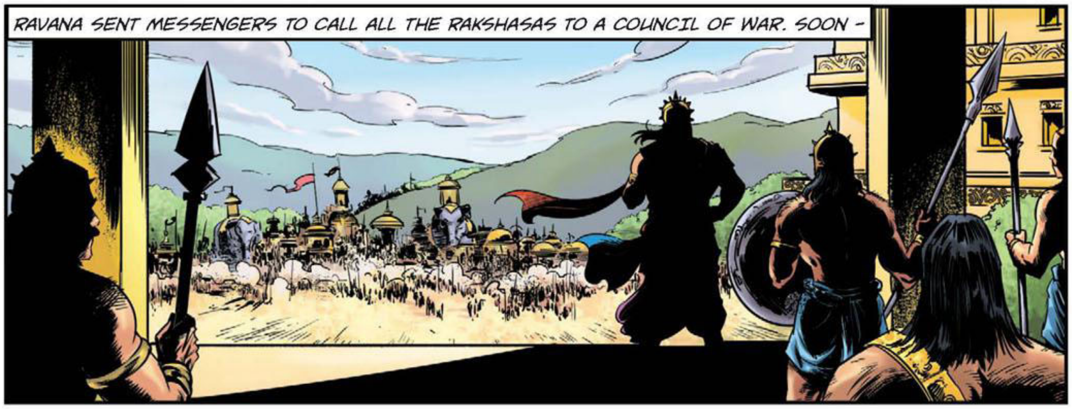
*SAAMA (FRIENDLY PERSUASION), DAANA (GIFTS), AND BHEDA (CREATING CONFLICT WITHIN THE ENEMY)

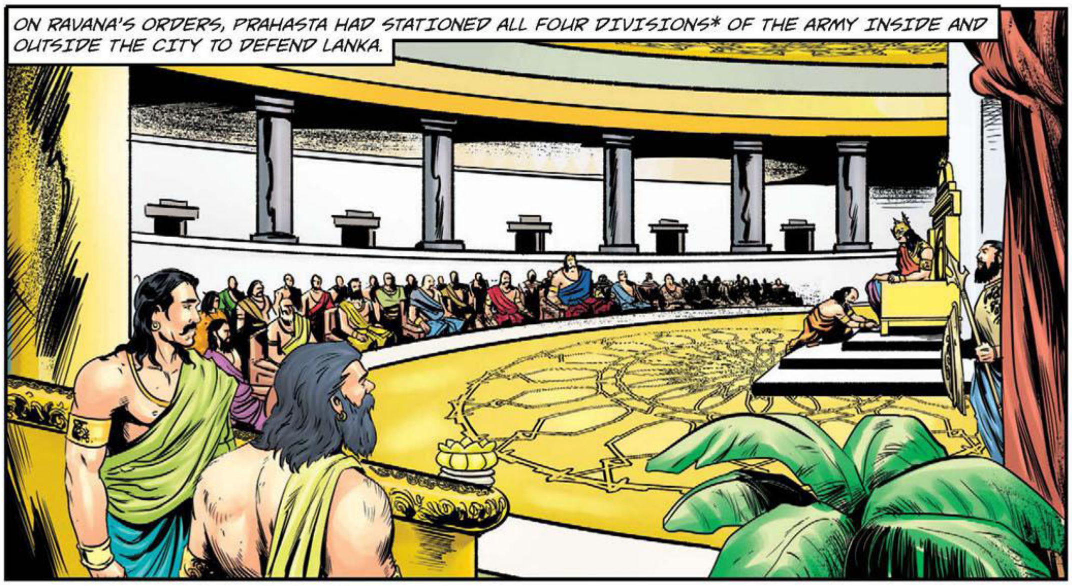

THE NEXT MORNING, VIBHISHANA TRIED TO PERSUADE RAVANA ONCE MORE.
SINCE SITA ARRIVED, WE HAVE SEEN EVIL PORTENTS. THE SACRIFICIAL FIRE IS FULL OF SMOKE AND SPARKS.
THERE ARE REPTILES IN THE KITCHENS AND FIRE SANCTUARIES. COWS' MILK GETS CURDLED. ELEPHANTS, HORSES, DONKEYS, CAMELS AND MULES ARE MISERABLE.


FLOCKS OF CROWS GATHER ON TOP OF BUILDINGS, UTTERING HARSH CRIES. SWARMS OF VULTURES HOVER OVER THE CITY AND THE LOUD CRIES OF CARNIVOROUS ANIMALS ARE HEARD AT THE CITY GATES.

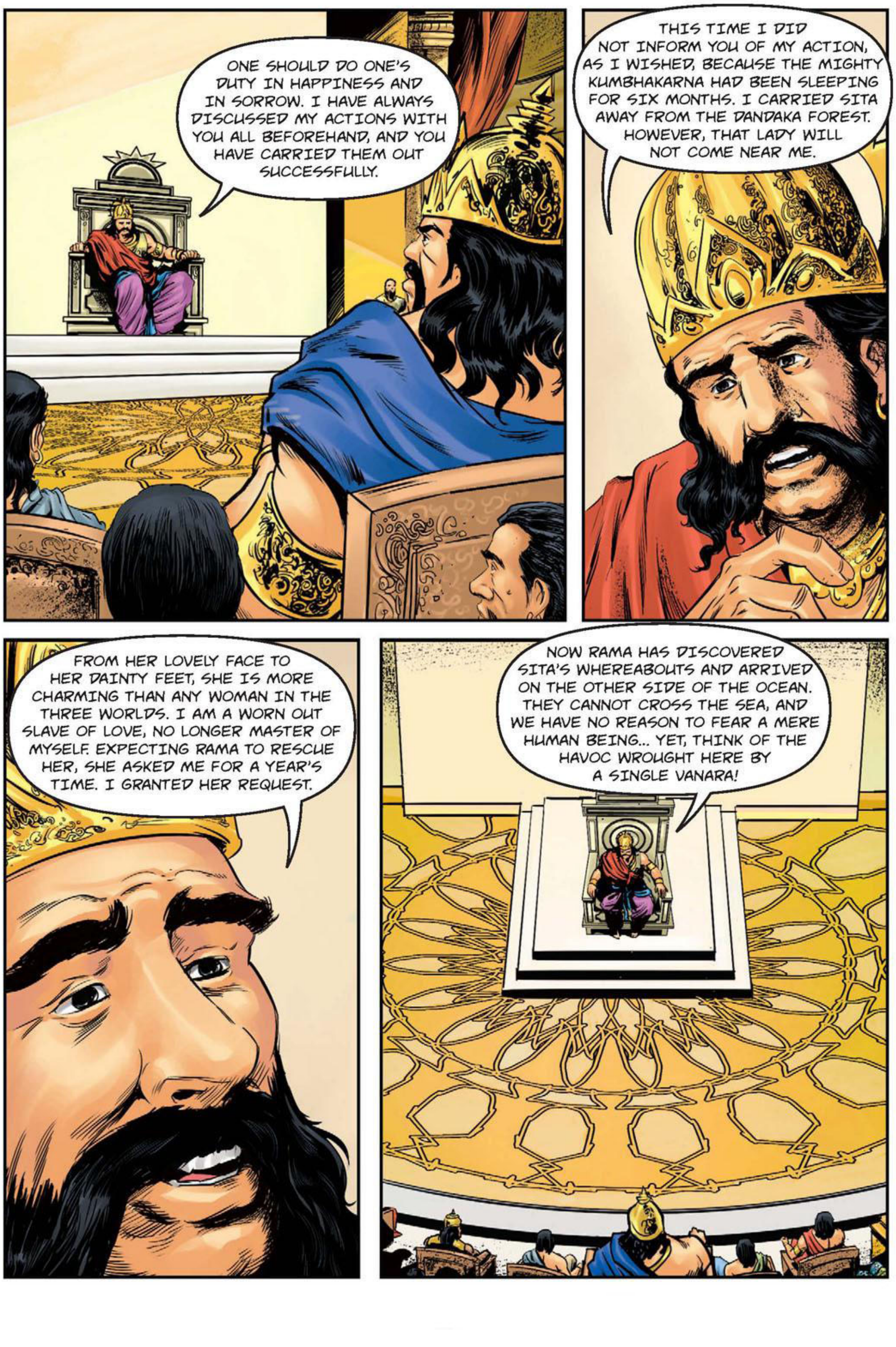

EVERYONE IN LANKA KNOWS THIS BUT THEY DARE NOT ADVISE YOU. YET I MUST SAY WHAT I HAVE SEEN AND HEARD. DON'T BE ANGRY WITH ME. PLEASE RESTORE SITA TO RAMA!
I SEE NO CAUSE FOR FEAR. RAMA SHALL NEVER GET SITA BACK!

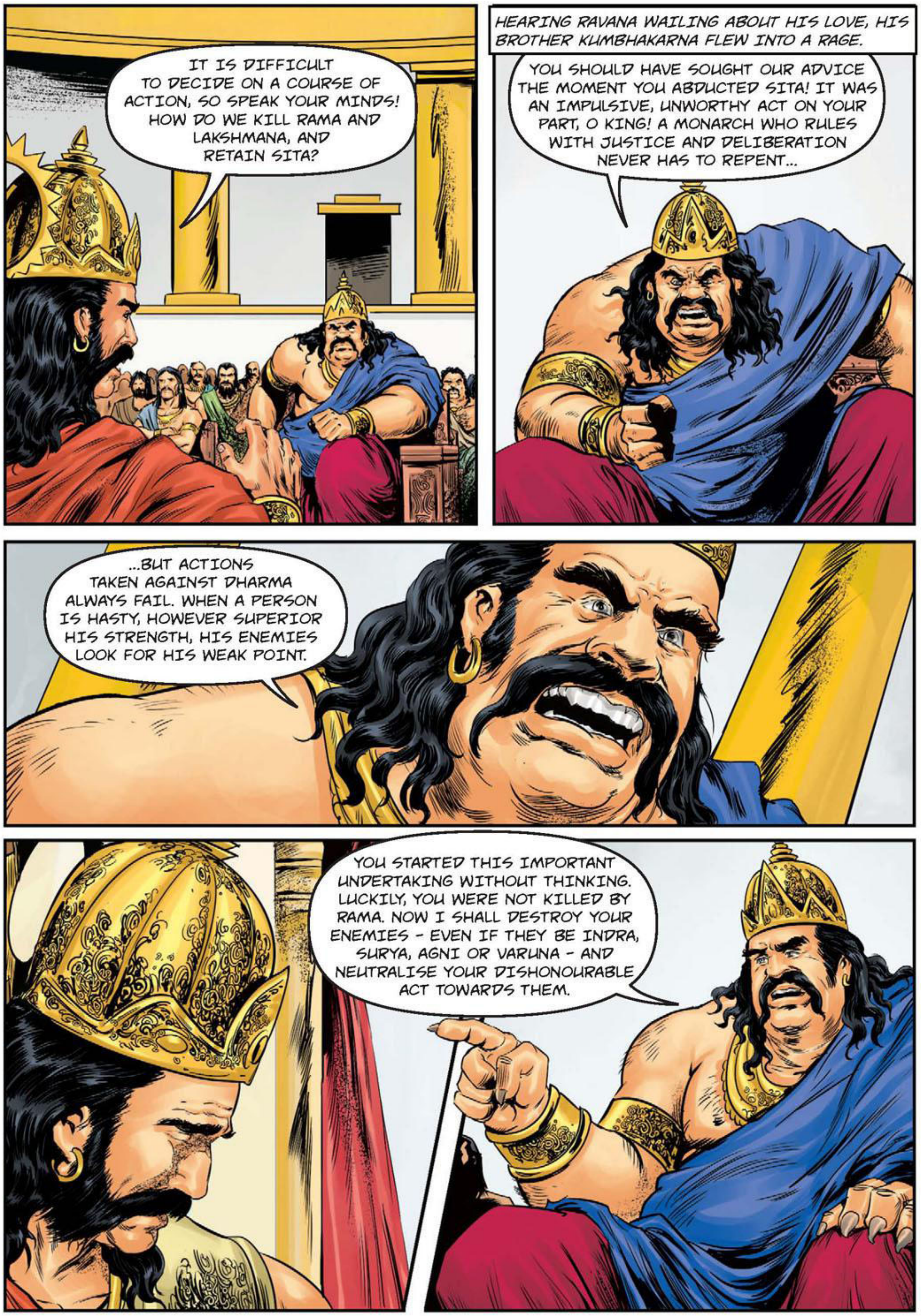

THE ANGRY KING DISMISSED HIS YOUNGER BROTHER. HIS MIND FILLED WITH THOUGHTS OF SITA, HE DROVE TO THE ASSEMBLY HALL, WHICH HAD BEEN BUILT BY VISHWAKARMA.

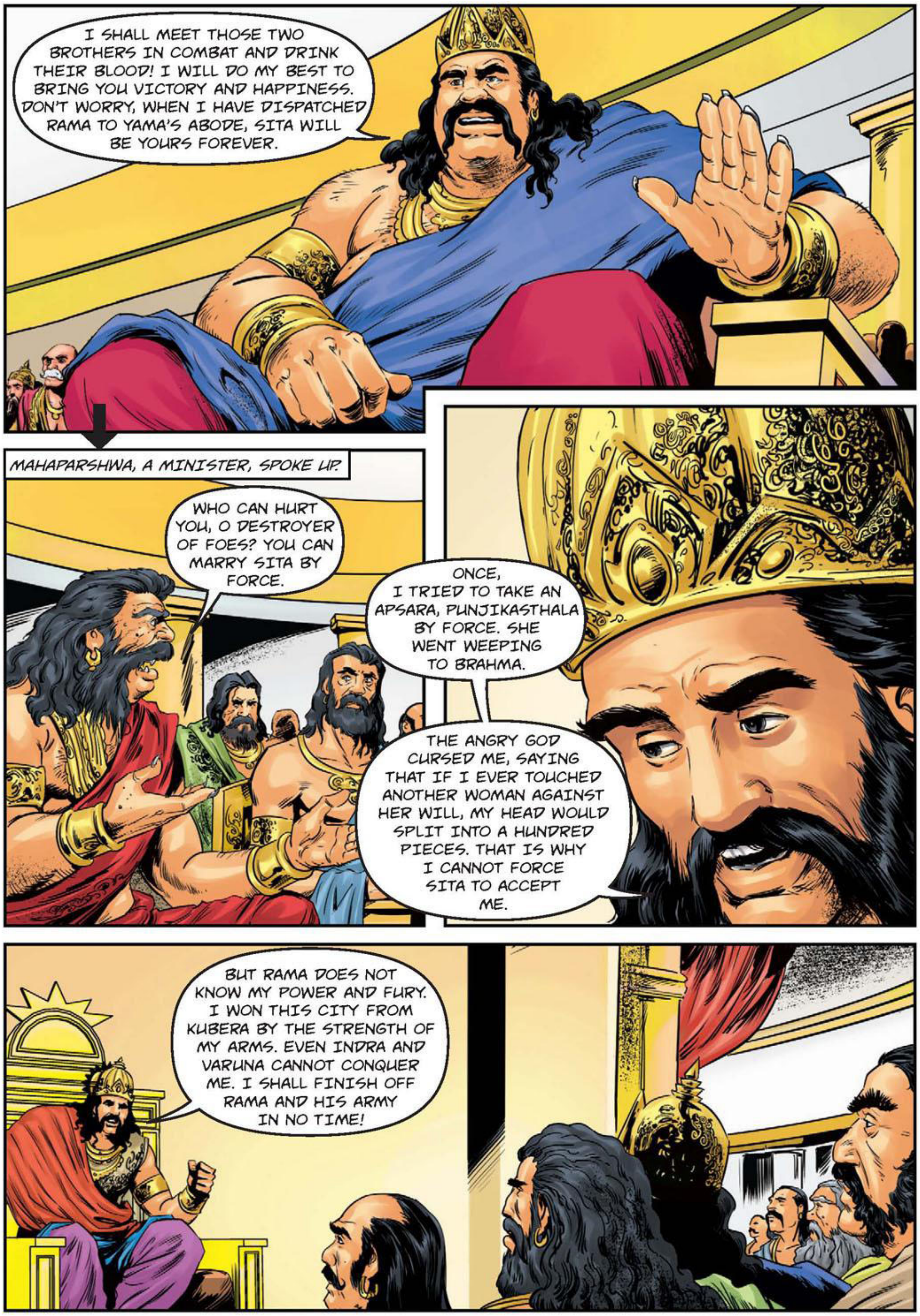

RAVANA SENT MESSENGERS TO CALL ALL THE RAKSHASAS TO A COUNCIL OF WAR. SOON –

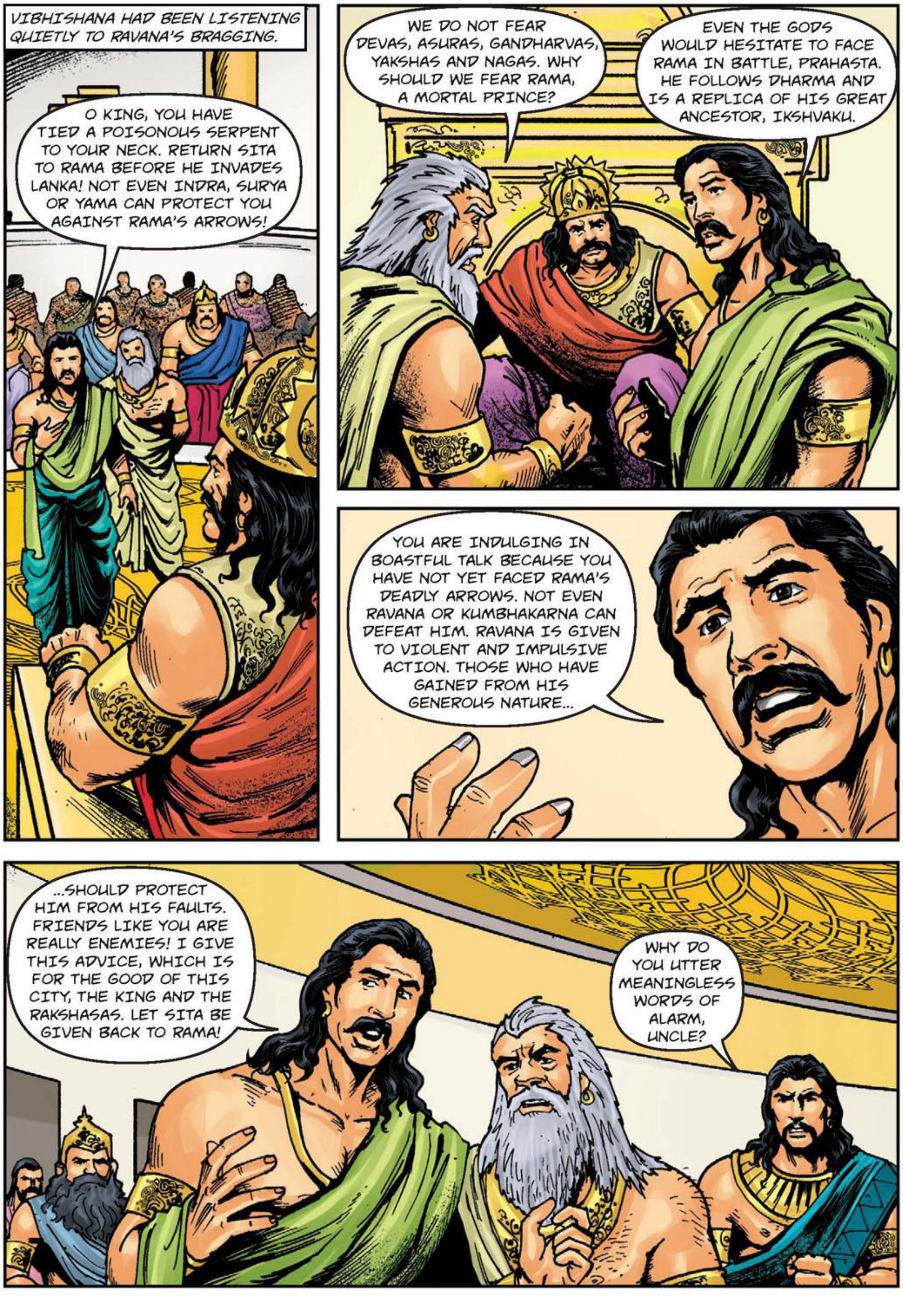

ON RAVANA'S ORDERS, PRAHASTA HAD STATIONED ALL FOUR DIVISIONS* OF THE ARMY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CITY TO DEFEND LANKA.

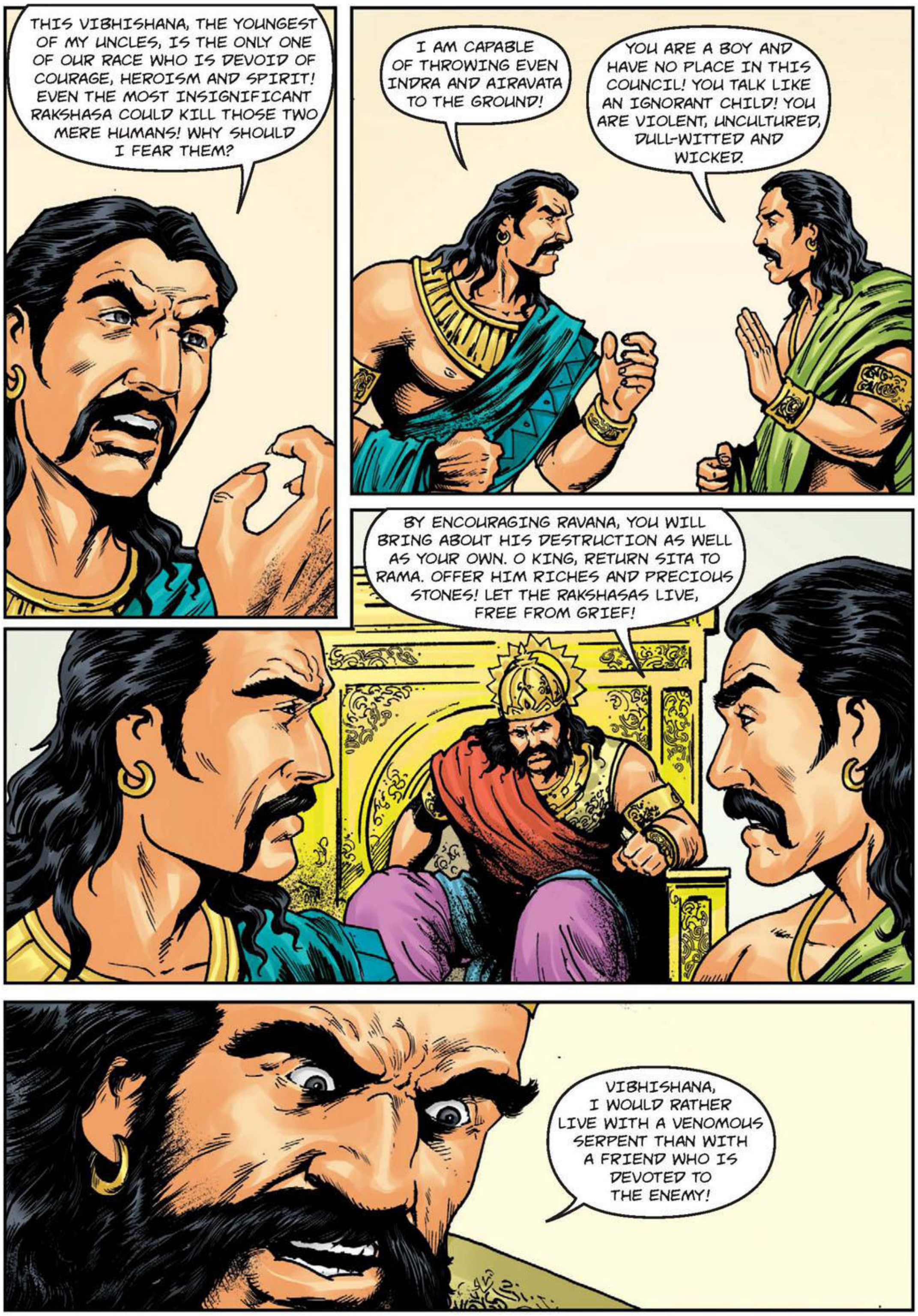
*INFANTRY, CAVALRY, ELEPHANTS AND CHARIOTS

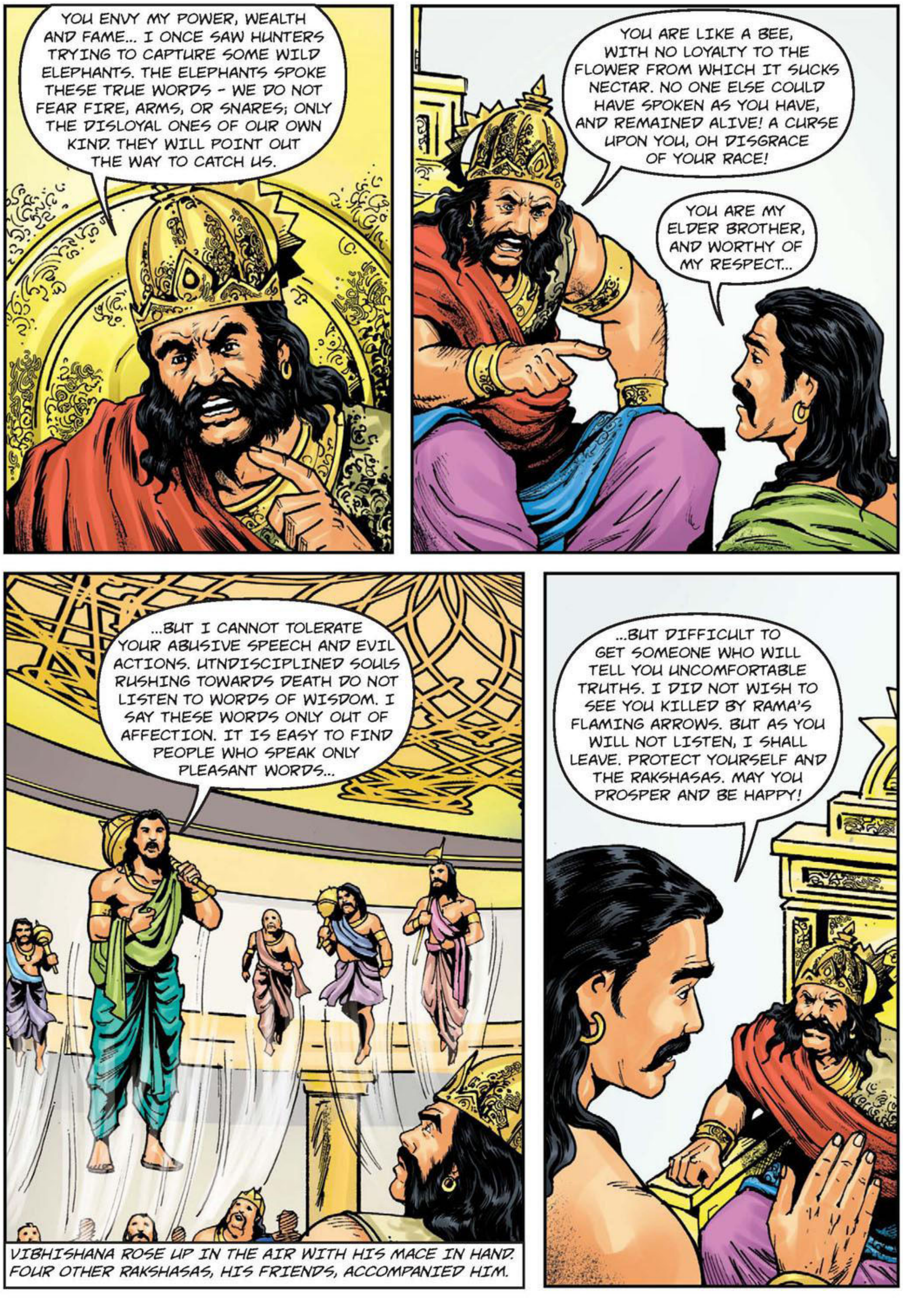

ONE SHOULD DO ONE'S DUTY IN HAPPINESS AND IN SORROW. I HAVE ALWAYS DISCUSSED MY ACTIONS WITH YOU ALL BEFOREHAND, AND YOU HAVE CARRIED THEM OUT SUCCESSFULLY.
THIS TIME I DID NOT INFORM YOU OF MY ACTION, AS I WISHED, BECAUSE THE MIGHTY KUMBHAKARNA HAD BEEN SLEEPING FOR SIX MONTHS. I CARRIED SITA AWAY FROM THE DANDAKA FOREST. HOWEVER, THAT LADY WILL NOT COME NEAR ME.
FROM HER LOVELY FACE TO HER DAINTY FEET, SHE IS MORE CHARMING THAN ANY WOMAN IN THE THREE WORLDS. I AM A WORN OUT SLAVE OF LOVE, NO LONGER MASTER OF MYSELF. EXPECTING RAMA TO RESCUE HER, SHE ASKED ME FOR A YEAR'S TIME. I GRANTED HER REQUEST.
NOW RAMA HAS DISCOVERED SITA'S WHEREABOUTS AND ARRIVED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OCEAN. THEY CANNOT CROSS THE SEA, AND WE HAVE NO REASON TO FEAR A MERE HUMAN BEING... YET, THINK OF THE HAVOC WROUGHT HERE BY A SINGLE VANARA!

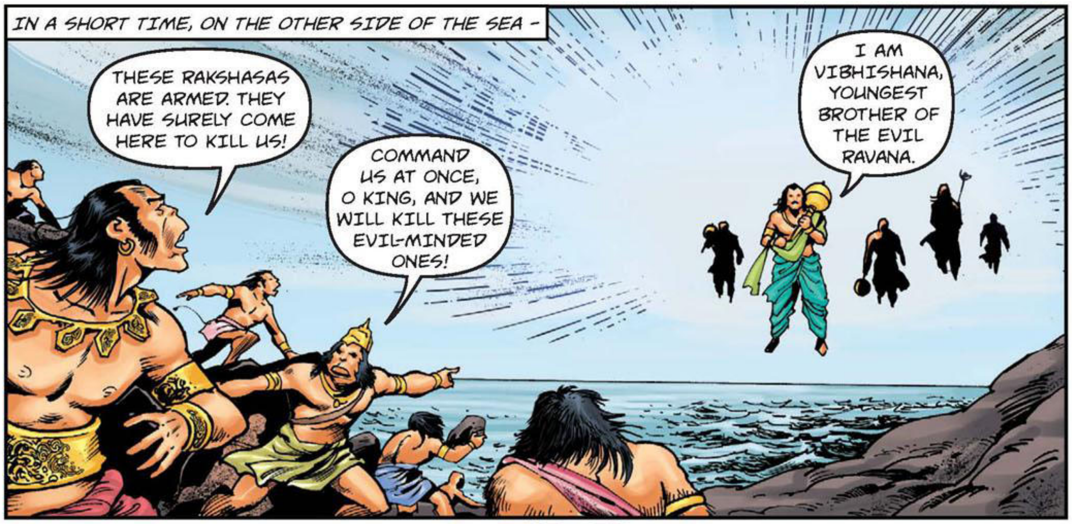

IT IS DIFFICULT TO DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION, SO SPEAK YOUR MINDS! HOW DO WE KILL RAMA AND LAKSHMANA, AND RETAIN SITA?
HEARING RAVANA WAILING ABOUT HIS LOVE, HIS BROTHER KUMBHAKARNA FLEW INTO A RAGE.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SOUGHT OUR ADVICE THE MOMENT YOU ABDUCTED SITA! IT WAS AN IMPULSIVE, UNWORTHY ACT ON YOUR PART, O KING! A MONARCH WHO RULES WITH JUSTICE AND DELIBERATION NEVER HAS TO REPENT...
...BUT ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST DHARMA ALWAYS FAIL. WHEN A PERSON IS HASTY, HOWEVER SUPERIOR HIS STRENGTH, HIS ENEMIES LOOK FOR HIS WEAK POINT.
YOU STARTED THIS IMPORTANT UNDERTAKING WITHOUT THINKING. LUCKILY, YOU WERE NOT KILLED BY RAMA. NOW I SHALL DESTROY YOUR ENEMIES - EVEN IF THEY BE INDRA, SURYA, AGNI OR VARUNA - AND NEUTRALISE YOUR DISHONOURABLE ACT TOWARDS THEM.

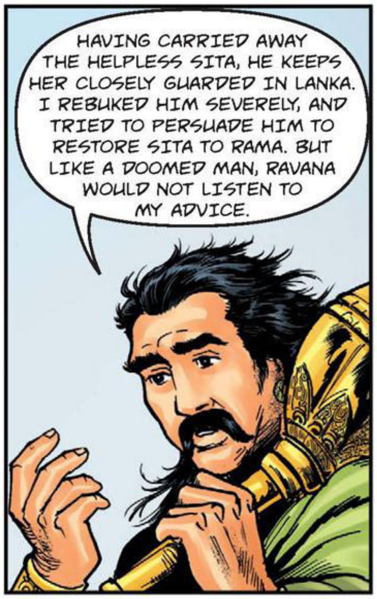

I SHALL MEET THOSE TWO BROTHERS IN COMBAT AND DRINK THEIR BLOOD! I WILL DO MY BEST TO BRING YOU VICTORY AND HAPPINESS. DON'T WORRY, WHEN I HAVE DISPATCHED RAMA TO YAMA'S ABODE, SITA WILL BE YOURS FOREVER.
MAHAPARSHWA, A MINISTER, SPOKE UP.
WHO CAN HURT YOU, O DESTROYER OF FOES? YOU CAN MARRY SITA BY FORCE.
ONCE, I TRIED TO TAKE AN APSARA, PUNJIKASTHALA BY FORCE. SHE WENT WEEPING TO BRAHMA.
THE ANGRY GOD CURSED ME, SAYING THAT IF I EVER TOUCHED ANOTHER WOMAN AGAINST HER WILL, MY HEAD WOULD SPLIT INTO A HUNDRED PIECES. THAT IS WHY I CANNOT FORCE SITA TO ACCEPT ME.
BUT RAMA DOES NOT KNOW MY POWER AND FURY. I WON THIS CITY FROM KUBERA BY THE STRENGTH OF MY ARMS. EVEN INDRA AND VARUNA CANNOT CONQUER ME. I SHALL FINISH OFF RAMA AND HIS ARMY IN NO TIME!

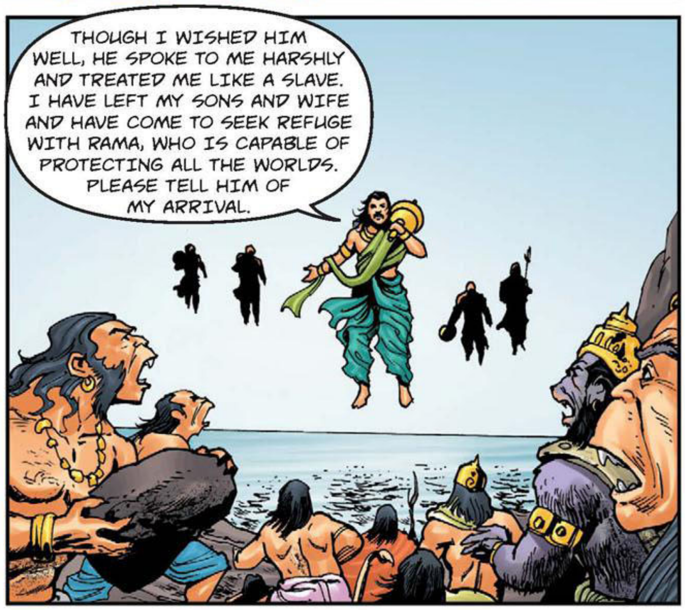

VIBHISHANA HAD BEEN LISTENING QUIETLY TO RAVANA'S BRAGGING.
O KING, YOU HAVE TIED A POISONOUS SERPENT TO YOUR NECK. RETURN SITA TO RAMA BEFORE HE INVADES LANKA! NOT EVEN INDRA, SURYA OR YAMA CAN PROTECT YOU AGAINST RAMA'S ARROWS!
WE DO NOT FEAR DEVAS, ASURAS, GANDHARVAS, YAKSHAS AND NAGAS. WHY SHOULD WE FEAR RAMA, A MORTAL PRINCE?
EVEN THE GODS WOULD HESITATE TO FACE RAMA IN BATTLE, PRAHASTA. HE FOLLOWS DHARMA AND IS A REPLICA OF HIS GREAT ANCESTOR, IKSHVAKU.
YOU ARE INDULGING IN BOASTFUL TALK BECAUSE YOU HAVE NOT YET FACED RAMA'S DEADLY ARROWS. NOT EVEN RAVANA OR KUMBHAKARNA CAN DEFEAT HIM. RAVANA IS GIVEN TO VIOLENT AND IMPULSIVE ACTION. THOSE WHO HAVE GAINED FROM HIS GENEROUS NATURE...
...SHOULD PROTECT HIM FROM HIS FAULTS. FRIENDS LIKE YOU ARE REALLY ENEMIES! I GIVE THIS ADVICE, WHICH IS FOR THE GOOD OF THIS CITY, THE KING AND THE RAKSHASAS. LET SITA BE GIVEN BACK TO RAMA!
WHY DO YOU UTTER MEANINGLESS WORDS OF ALARM, UNCLE?

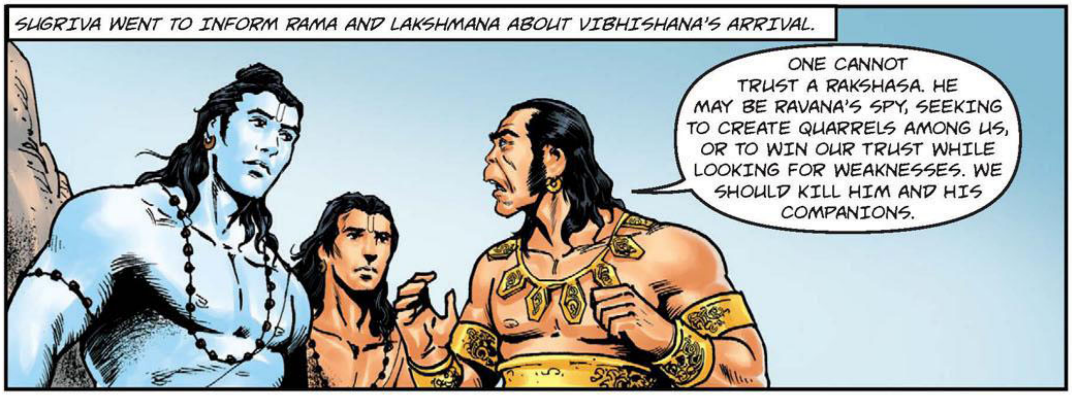

THIS VIBHISHANA, THE YOUNGEST OF MY UNCLES, IS THE ONLY ONE OF OUR RACE WHO IS DEVOID OF COURAGE, HEROISM AND SPIRIT! EVEN THE MOST INSIGNIFICANT RAKSHASA COULD KILL THOSE TWO MERE HUMANS! WHY SHOULD I FEAR THEM?
I AM CAPABLE OF THROWING EVEN INDRA AND AIRAVATA TO THE GROUND!
YOU ARE A BOY AND HAVE NO PLACE IN THIS COUNCIL! YOU TALK LIKE AN IGNORANT CHILD! YOU ARE VIOLENT, UNCULTURED, DULL-WITTED AND WICKED.
BY ENCOURAGING RAVANA, YOU WILL BRING ABOUT HIS DESTRUCTION AS WELL AS YOUR OWN. O KING, RETURN SITA TO RAMA. OFFER HIM RICHES AND PRECIOUS STONES! LET THE RAKSHASAS LIVE, FREE FROM GRIEF!
VIBHISHANA, I WOULD RATHER LIVE WITH A VENOMOUS SERPENT THAN WITH A FRIEND WHO IS DEVOTED TO THE ENEMY!

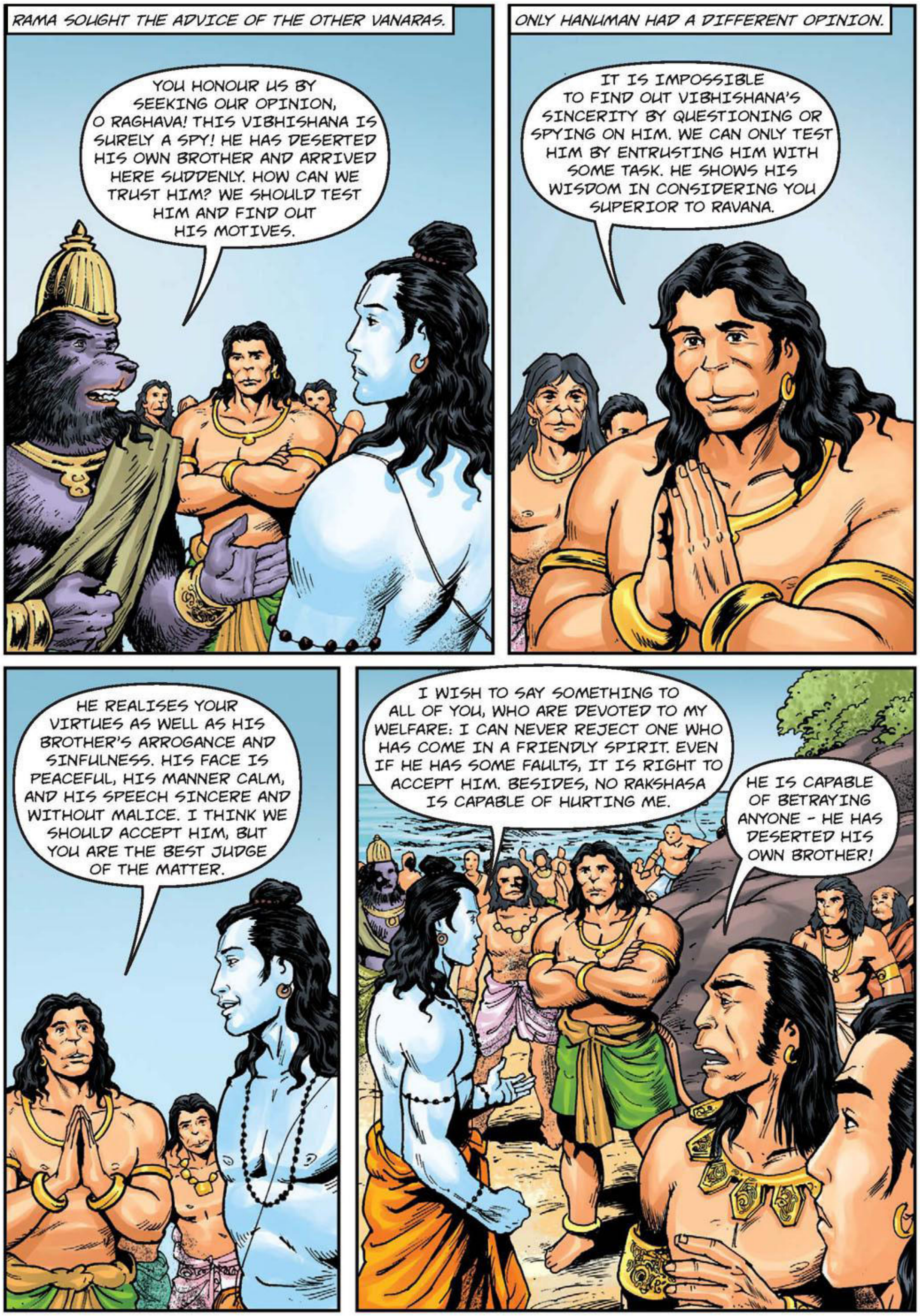

YOU ENVY MY POWER, WEALTH AND FAME... I ONCE SAW HUNTERS TRYING TO CAPTURE SOME WILD ELEPHANTS. THE ELEPHANTS SPOKE THESE TRUE WORDS - WE DO NOT FEAR FIRE, ARMS, OR SNARES; ONLY THE DISLOYAL ONES OF OUR OWN KIND. THEY WILL POINT OUT THE WAY TO CATCH US.
YOU ARE LIKE A BEE, WITH NO LOYALTY TO THE FLOWER FROM WHICH IT SUCKS NECTAR. NO ONE ELSE COULD HAVE SPOKEN AS YOU HAVE, AND REMAINED ALIVE! A CURSE UPON YOU, OH DISGRACE OF YOUR RACE!
YOU ARE MY ELDER BROTHER, AND WORTHY OF MY RESPECT...
...BUT I CANNOT TOLERATE YOUR ABUSIVE SPEECH AND EVIL ACTIONS. UNDISCIPLINED SOULS RUSHING TOWARDS DEATH DO NOT LISTEN TO WORDS OF WISDOM. I SAY THESE WORDS ONLY OUT OF AFFECTION. IT IS EASY TO FIND PEOPLE WHO SPEAK ONLY PLEASANT WORDS...
VIBHISHANA ROSE UP IN THE AIR WITH HIS MACE IN HAND. FOUR OTHER RAKSHASAS, HIS FRIENDS, ACCOMPANIED HIM.
...BUT DIFFICULT TO GET SOMEONE WHO WILL TELL YOU UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTHS. I DID NOT WISH TO SEE YOU KILLED BY RAMA'S FLAMING ARROWS. BUT AS YOU WILL NOT LISTEN, I SHALL LEAVE. PROTECT YOURSELF AND THE RAKSHASAS. MAY YOU PROSPER AND BE HAPPY!

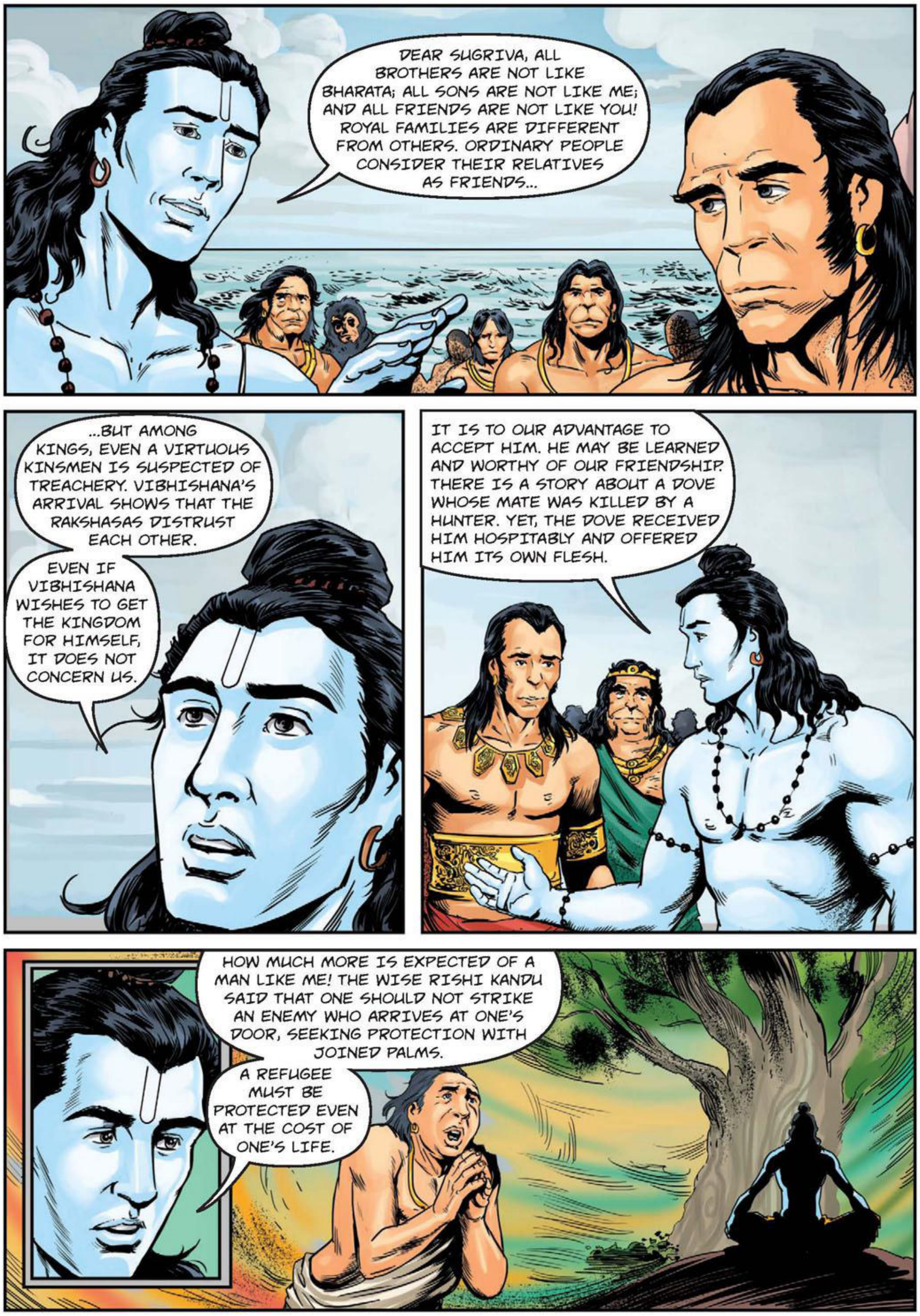

IN A SHORT TIME, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SEA –
THESE RAKSHASAS ARE ARMED. THEY HAVE SURELY COME HERE TO KILL US!
COMMAND US AT ONCE, O KING, AND WE WILL KILL THESE EVIL-MINDED ONES!
I AM VIBHISHANA, YOUNGEST BROTHER OF THE EVIL RAVANA.

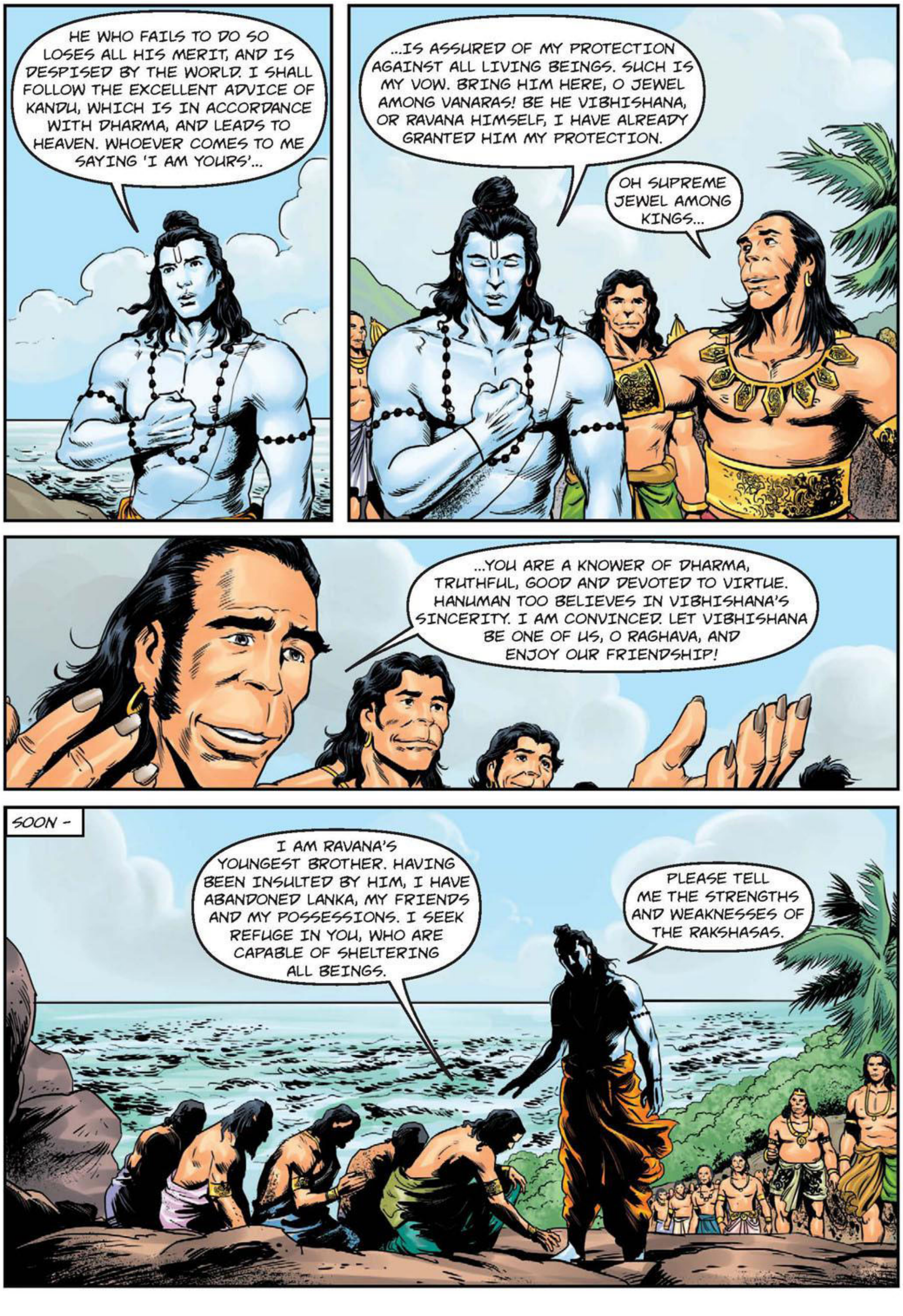

HAVING CARRIED AWAY THE HELPLESS SITA, HE KEEPS HER CLOSELY GUARDED IN LANKA. I REBUKED HIM SEVERELY, AND TRIED TO PERSUADE HIM TO RESTORE SITA TO RAMA. BUT LIKE A DOOMED MAN, RAVANA WOULD NOT LISTEN TO MY ADVICE.

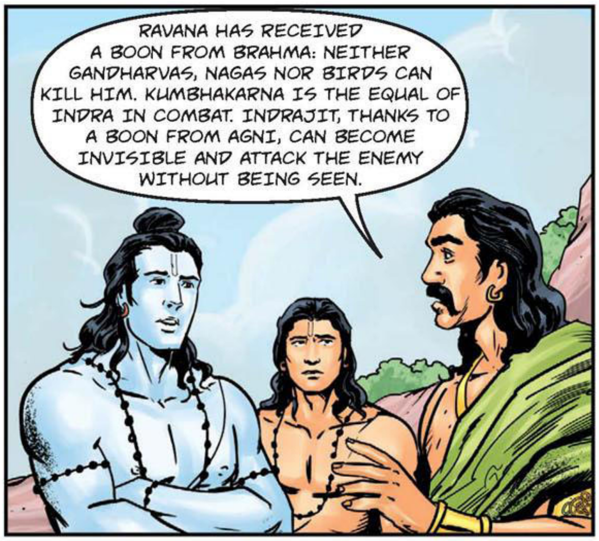

THOUGH I WISHED HIM WELL, HE SPOKE TO ME HARSHLY AND TREATED ME LIKE A SLAVE. I HAVE LEFT MY SONS AND WIFE AND HAVE COME TO SEEK REFUGE WITH RAMA, WHO IS CAPABLE OF PROTECTING ALL THE WORLDS. PLEASE TELL HIM OF MY ARRIVAL.

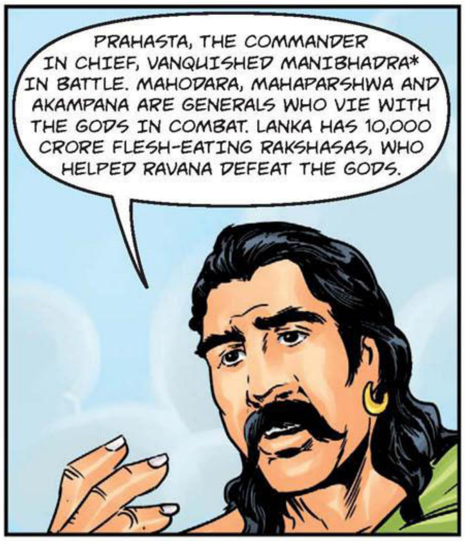

SUGRIVA WENT TO INFORM RAMA AND LAKSHMANA ABOUT VIBHISHANA'S ARRIVAL.
ONE CANNOT TRUST A RAKSHASA. HE MAY BE RAVANA'S SPY, SEEKING TO CREATE QUARRELS AMONG US, OR TO WIN OUR TRUST WHILE LOOKING FOR WEAKNESSES. WE SHOULD KILL HIM AND HIS COMPANIONS.

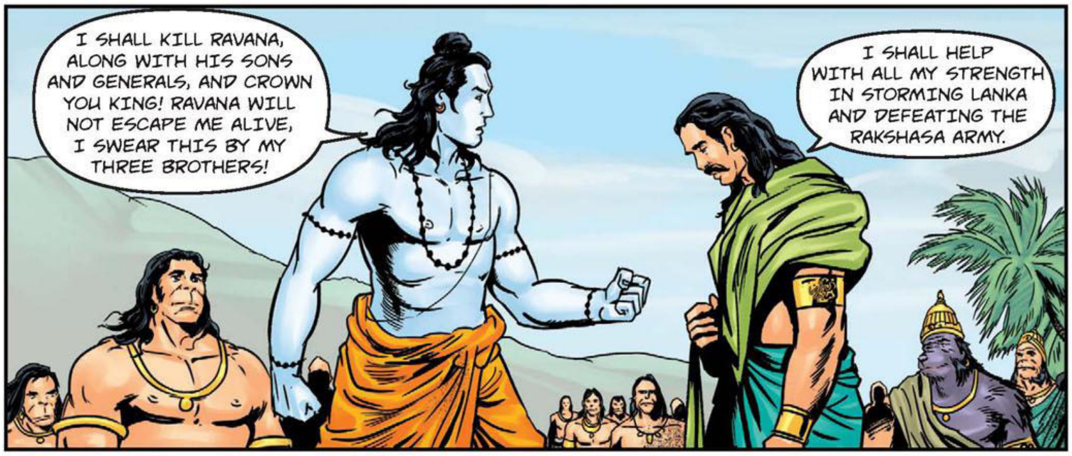

RAMA SOUGHT THE ADVICE OF THE OTHER VANARAS.
YOU HONOUR US BY SEEKING OUR OPINION, O RAGHAVA! THIS VIBHISHANA IS SURELY A SPY! HE HAS DESERTED HIS OWN BROTHER AND ARRIVED HERE SUDDENLY. HOW CAN WE TRUST HIM? WE SHOULD TEST HIM AND FIND OUT HIS MOTIVES.
ONLY HANUMAN HAD A DIFFERENT OPINION.
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND OUT VIBHISHANA'S SINCERITY BY QUESTIONING OR SPYING ON HIM. WE CAN ONLY TEST HIM BY ENTRUSTING HIM WITH SOME TASK. HE SHOWS HIS WISDOM IN CONSIDERING YOU SUPERIOR TO RAVANA.
HE REALISES YOUR VIRTUES AS WELL AS HIS BROTHER'S ARROGANCE AND SINFULNESS. HIS FACE IS PEACEFUL, HIS MANNER CALM, AND HIS SPEECH SINCERE AND WITHOUT MALICE. I THINK WE SHOULD ACCEPT HIM, BUT YOU ARE THE BEST JUDGE OF THE MATTER.
I WISH TO SAY SOMETHING TO ALL OF YOU, WHO ARE DEVOTED TO MY WELFARE: I CAN NEVER REJECT ONE WHO HAS COME IN A FRIENDLY SPIRIT. EVEN IF HE HAS SOME FAULTS, IT IS RIGHT TO ACCEPT HIM. BESIDES, NO RAKSHASA IS CAPABLE OF HURTING ME.
HE IS CAPABLE OF BETRAYING ANYONE - HE HAS DESERTED HIS OWN BROTHER!

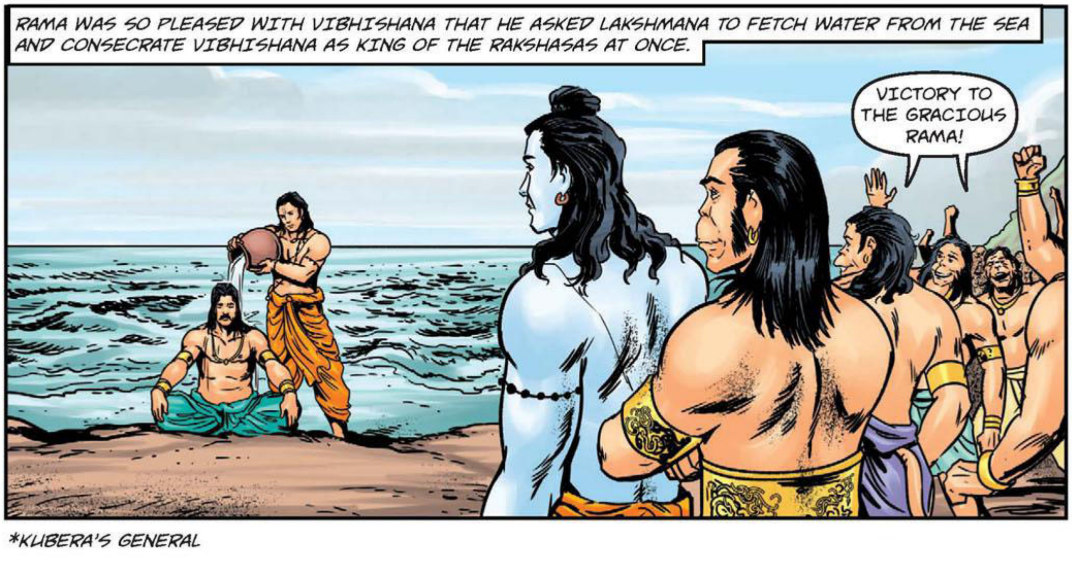

DEAR SUGRIVA, ALL BROTHERS ARE NOT LIKE BHARATA; ALL SONS ARE NOT LIKE ME; AND ALL FRIENDS ARE NOT LIKE YOU! ROYAL FAMILIES ARE DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS. ORDINARY PEOPLE CONSIDER THEIR RELATIVES AS FRIENDS...
...BUT AMONG KINGS, EVEN A VIRTUOUS KINSMEN IS SUSPECTED OF TREACHERY. VIBHISHANA'S ARRIVAL SHOWS THAT THE RAKSHASAS DISTRUST EACH OTHER.
EVEN IF VIBHISHANA WISHES TO GET THE KINGDOM FOR HIMSELF, IT DOES NOT CONCERN US.
IT IS TO OUR ADVANTAGE TO ACCEPT HIM. HE MAY BE LEARNED AND WORTHY OF OUR FRIENDSHIP. THERE IS A STORY ABOUT A DOVE WHOSE MATE WAS KILLED BY A HUNTER. YET, THE DOVE RECEIVED HIM HOSPITABLY AND OFFERED HIM ITS OWN FLESH.
HOW MUCH MORE IS EXPECTED OF A MAN LIKE ME! THE WISE RISHI KANDU SAID THAT ONE SHOULD NOT STRIKE AN ENEMY WHO ARRIVES AT ONE'S DOOR, SEEKING PROTECTION WITH JOINED PALMS.
A REFUGEE MUST BE PROTECTED EVEN AT THE COST OF ONE'S LIFE.


HE WHO FAILS TO DO SO LOSES ALL HIS MERIT, AND IS DESPISED BY THE WORLD. I SHALL FOLLOW THE EXCELLENT ADVICE OF KANDU, WHICH IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH DHARMA, AND LEADS TO HEAVEN. WHOEVER COMES TO ME SAYING 'I AM YOURS'...
...IS ASSURED OF MY PROTECTION AGAINST ALL LIVING BEINGS. SUCH IS MY VOW. BRING HIM HERE, O JEWEL AMONG VANARAS! BE HE VIBHISHANA, OR RAVANA HIMSELF, I HAVE ALREADY GRANTED HIM MY PROTECTION.
OH SUPREME JEWEL AMONG KINGS...
...YOU ARE A KNOWER OF DHARMA, TRUTHFUL, GOOD AND DEVOTED TO VIRTUE. HANUMAN TOO BELIEVES IN VIBHISHANA'S SINCERITY. I AM CONVINCED. LET VIBHISHANA BE ONE OF US, O RAGHAVA, AND ENJOY OUR FRIENDSHIP!
SOON -
I AM RAVANA'S YOUNGEST BROTHER. HAVING BEEN INSULTED BY HIM, I HAVE ABANDONED LANKA, MY FRIENDS AND MY POSSESSIONS. I SEEK REFUGE IN YOU, WHO ARE CAPABLE OF SHELTERING ALL BEINGS.
PLEASE TELL ME THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE RAKSHASAS.

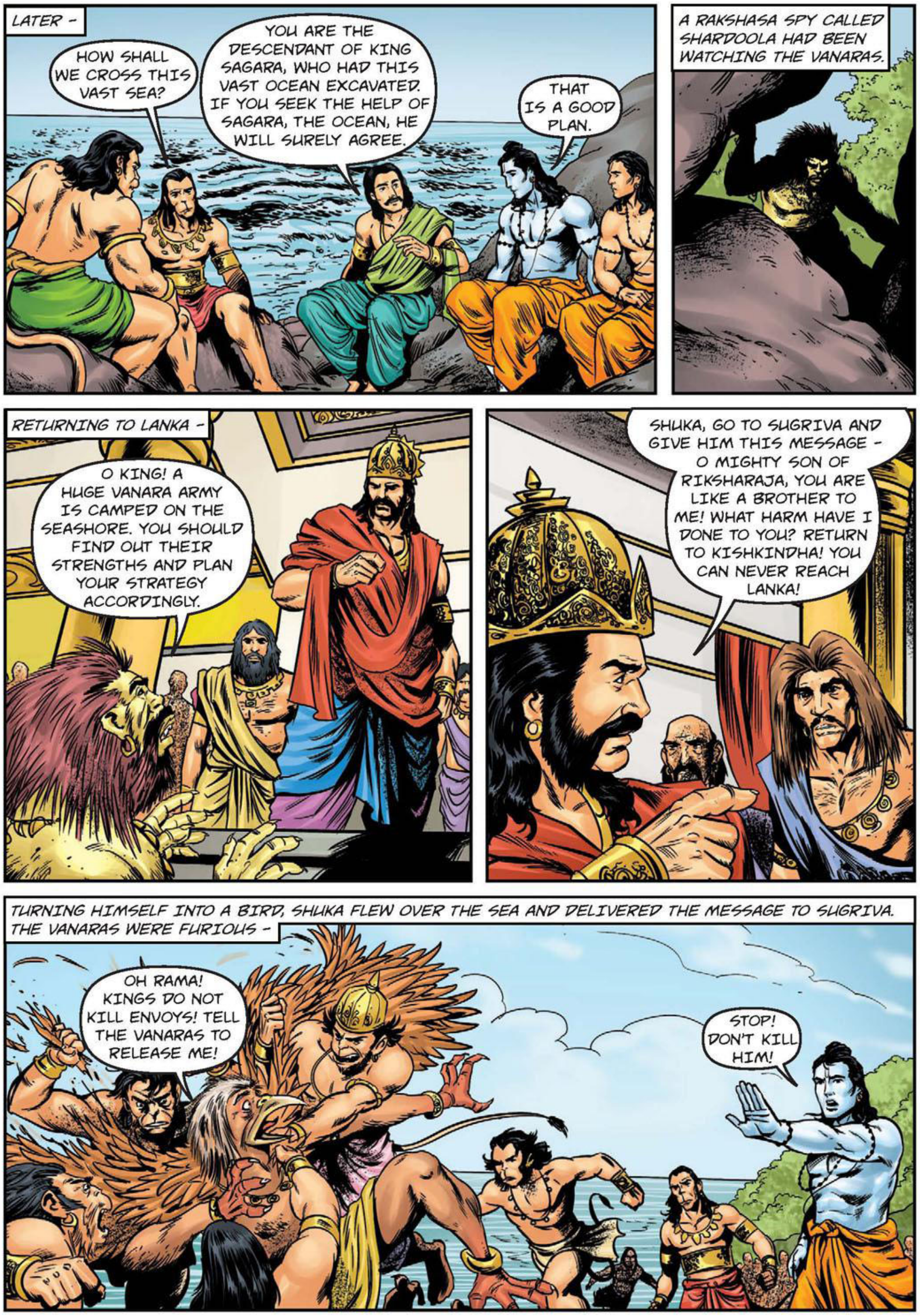

RAVANA HAS RECEIVED A BOON FROM BRAHMA: NEITHER GANDHARVAS, NAGAS NOR BIRDS CAN KILL HIM. KUMBHAKARNA IS THE EQUAL OF INDRA IN COMBAT. INDRAJIT, THANKS TO A BOON FROM AGNI, CAN BECOME INVISIBLE AND ATTACK THE ENEMY WITHOUT BEING SEEN.

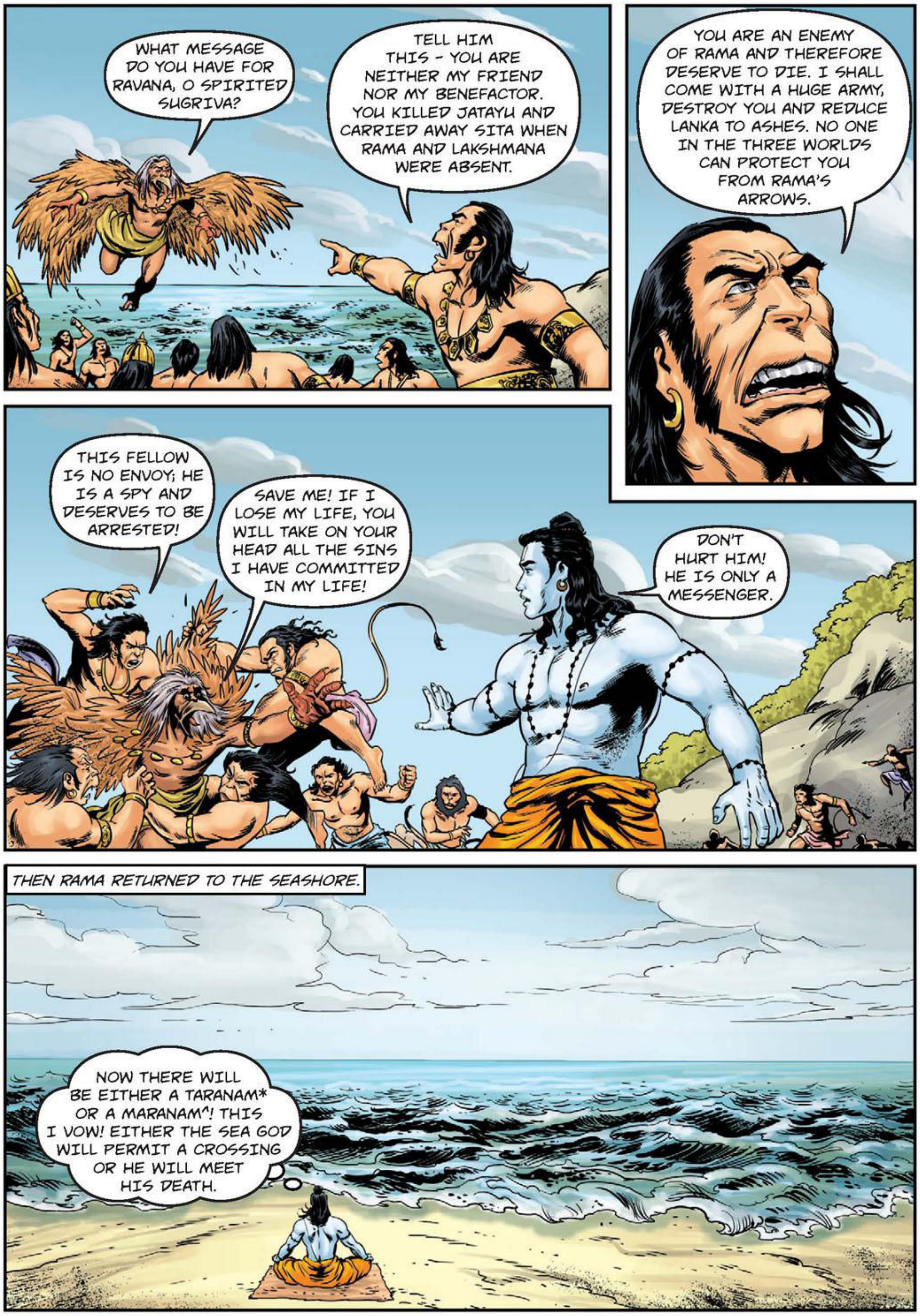

PRAHASTA, THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF, VANQUISHED MANIBHADRA* IN BATTLE. MAHODARA, MAHAPARSHWA AND AKAMPANA ARE GENERALS WHO VIE WITH THE GODS IN COMBAT. LANKA HAS 10,000 CRORE FLESH-EATING RAKSHASAS, WHO HELPED RAVANA DEFEAT THE GODS.


I SHALL KILL RAVANA, ALONG WITH HIS SONS AND GENERALS, AND CROWN YOU KING! RAVANA WILL NOT ESCAPE ME ALIVE, I SWEAR THIS BY MY THREE BROTHERS!
I SHALL HELP WITH ALL MY STRENGTH IN STORMING LANKA AND DEFEATING THE RAKSHASA ARMY.

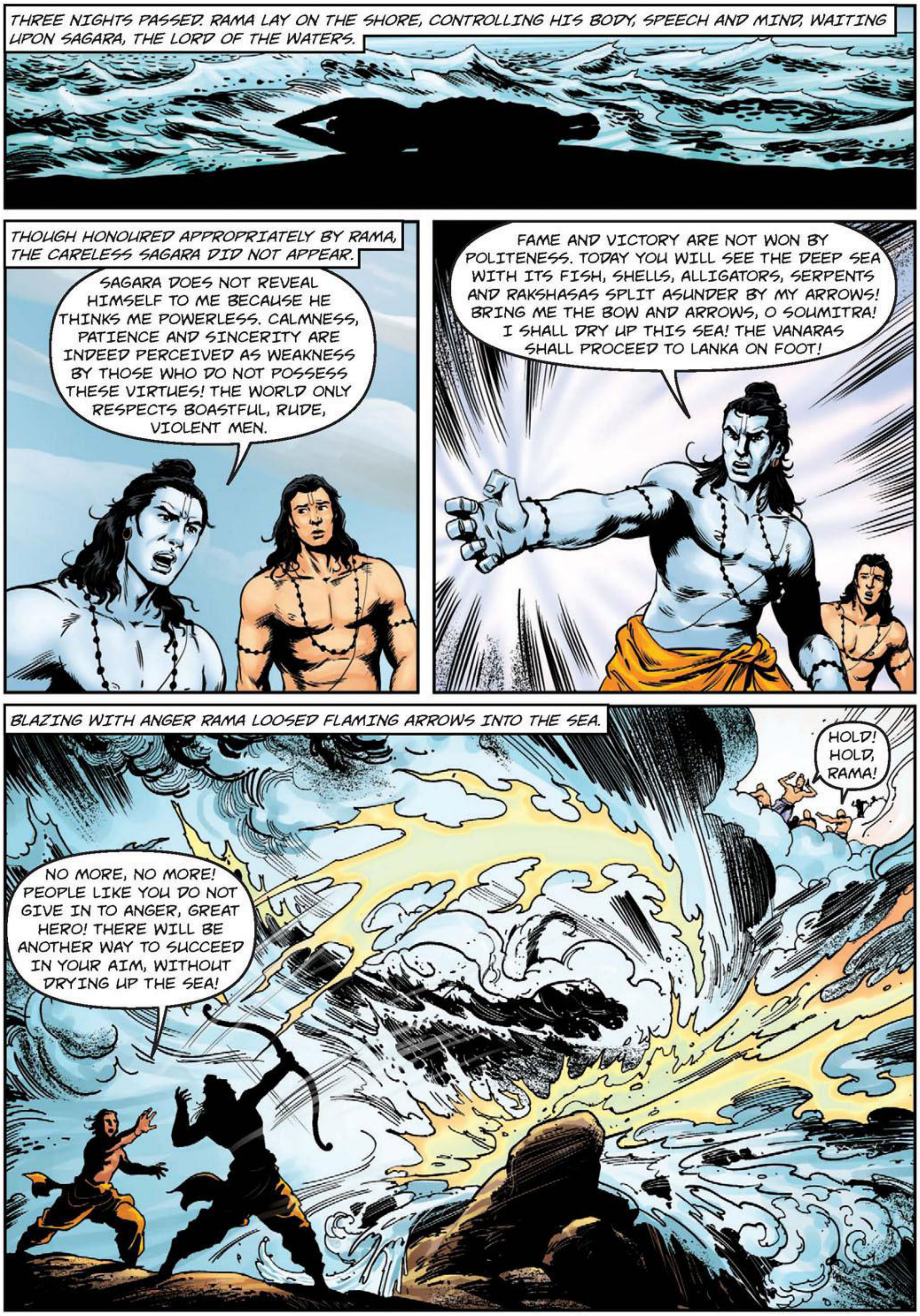

RAMA WAS SO PLEASED WITH VIBHISHANA THAT HE ASKED LAKSHMANA TO FETCH WATER FROM THE SEA AND CONSECRATE VIBHISHANA AS KING OF THE RAKSHASAS AT ONCE.
VICTORY TO THE GRACIOUS RAMA!

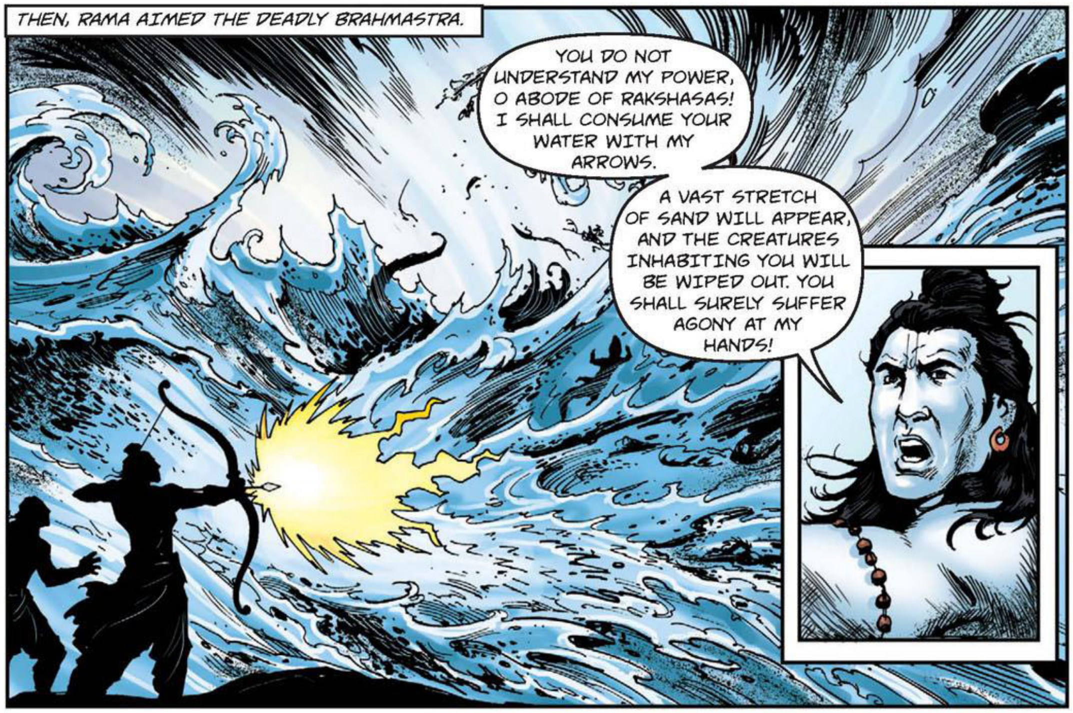
*KUBERA'S GENERAL

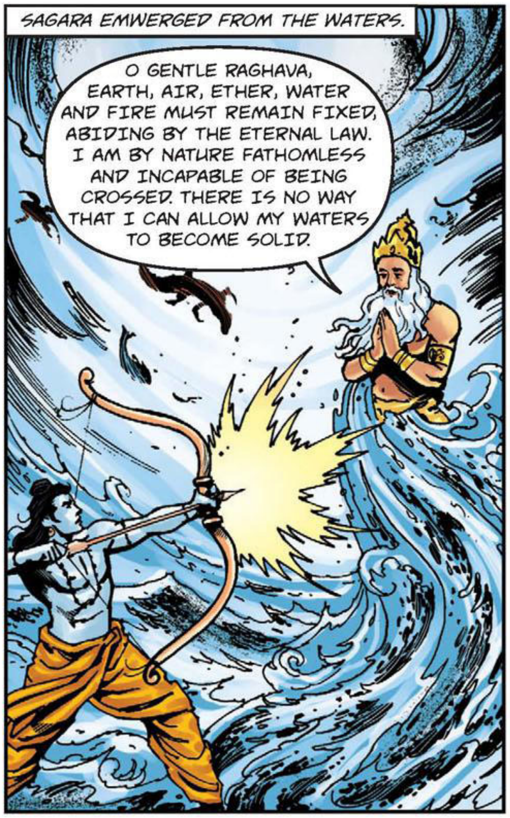

LATER -
HOW SHALL WE CROSS THIS VAST SEA?
YOU ARE THE DESCENDANT OF KING SAGARA, WHO HAD THIS VAST OCEAN EXCAVATED. IF YOU SEEK THE HELP OF SAGARA, THE OCEAN, HE WILL SURELY AGREE.
THAT IS A GOOD PLAN.
A RAKSHASA SPY CALLED SHARDOOLA HAD BEEN WATCHING THE VANARAS.
RETURNING TO LANKA -
O KING! A HUGE VANARA ARMY IS CAMPED ON THE SEASHORE. YOU SHOULD FIND OUT THEIR STRENGTHS AND PLAN YOUR STRATEGY ACCORDINGLY.
SHUKA, GO TO SUGRIVA AND GIVE HIM THIS MESSAGE - O MIGHTY SON OF RIKSHARAJA, YOU ARE LIKE A BROTHER TO ME! WHAT HARM HAVE I DONE TO YOU? RETURN TO KISHKINDHA! YOU CAN NEVER REACH LANKA!
TURNING HIMSELF INTO A BIRD, SHUKA FLEW OVER THE SEA AND DELIVERED THE MESSAGE TO SUGRIVA. THE VANARAS WERE FURIOUS -
OH RAMA! KINGS DO NOT KILL ENVOYS! TELL THE VANARAS TO RELEASE ME!
STOP! DON'T KILL HIM!

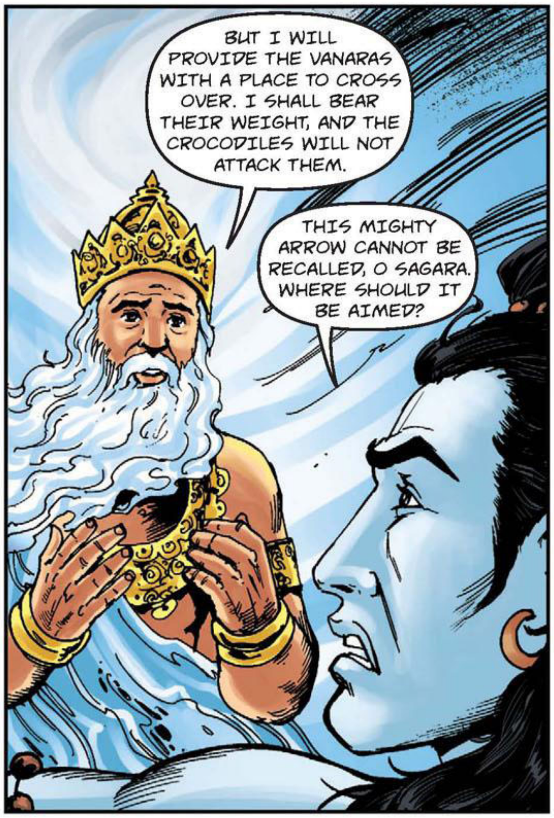

WHAT MESSAGE DO YOU HAVE FOR RAVANA, O SPIRITED SUGRIVA?
TELL HIM THIS - YOU ARE NEITHER MY FRIEND NOR MY BENEFACTOR. YOU KILLED JATAYU AND CARRIED AWAY SITA WHEN RAMA AND LAKSHMANA WERE ABSENT.
YOU ARE AN ENEMY OF RAMA AND THEREFORE DESERVE TO DIE. I SHALL COME WITH A HUGE ARMY, DESTROY YOU AND REDUCE LANKA TO ASHES. NO ONE IN THE THREE WORLDS CAN PROTECT YOU FROM RAMA'S ARROWS.
THIS FELLOW IS NO ENVOY; HE IS A SPY AND DESERVES TO BE ARRESTED!
SAVE ME! IF I LOSE MY LIFE, YOU WILL TAKE ON YOUR HEAD ALL THE SINS I HAVE COMMITTED IN MY LIFE!
DON'T HURT HIM! HE IS ONLY A MESSENGER.
THEN RAMA RETURNED TO THE SEASHORE.
NOW THERE WILL BE EITHER A TARANAM* OR A MARANAM^! THIS I VOW! EITHER THE SEA GOD WILL PERMIT A CROSSING OR HE WILL MEET HIS DEATH.

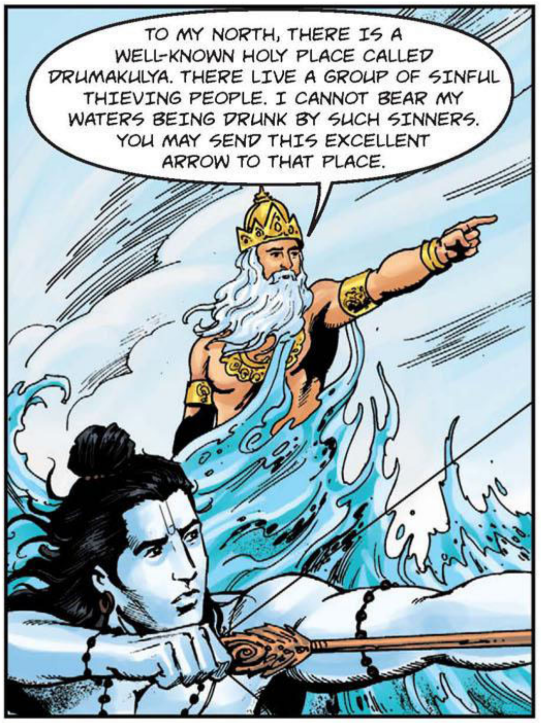
*A CROSSING
^A DEATH

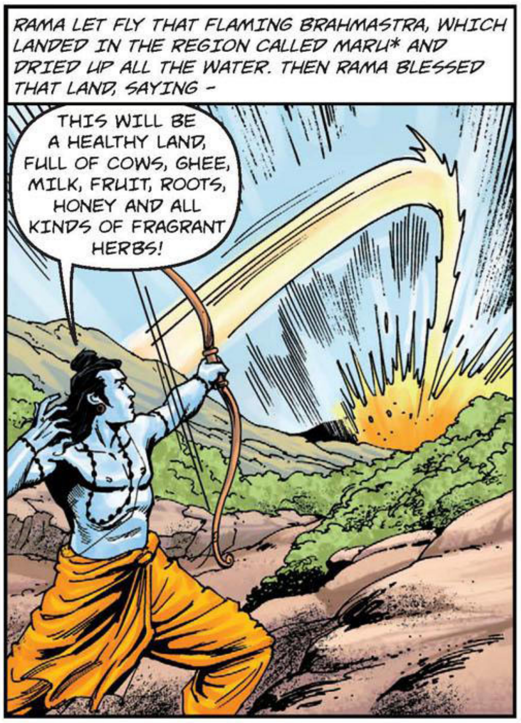

THREE NIGHTS PASSED. RAMA LAY ON THE SHORE, CONTROLLING HIS BODY, SPEECH AND MIND, WAITING UPON SAGARA, THE LORD OF THE WATERS.
THOUGH HONOURED APPROPRIATELY BY RAMA, THE CARELESS SAGARA DID NOT APPEAR.
SAGARA DOES NOT REVEAL HIMSELF TO ME BECAUSE HE THINKS ME POWERLESS. CALMNESS, PATIENCE AND SINCERITY ARE INDEED PERCEIVED AS WEAKNESS BY THOSE WHO DO NOT POSSESS THESE VIRTUES! THE WORLD ONLY RESPECTS BOASTFUL, RUDE, VIOLENT MEN.
FAME AND VICTORY ARE NOT WON BY POLITENESS. TODAY YOU WILL SEE THE DEEP SEA WITH ITS FISH, SHELLS, ALLIGATORS, SERPENTS AND RAKSHASAS SPLIT ASUNDER BY MY ARROWS! BRING ME THE BOW AND ARROWS, O SOUMITRA! I SHALL DRY UP THIS SEA! THE VANARAS SHALL PROCEED TO LANKA ON FOOT!
BLAZING WITH ANGER RAMA LOOSED FLAMING ARROWS INTO THE SEA.
HOLD! HOLD, RAMA!
NO MORE, NO MORE! PEOPLE LIKE YOU DO NOT GIVE IN TO ANGER, GREAT HERO! THERE WILL BE ANOTHER WAY TO SUCCEED IN YOUR AIM, WITHOUT DRYING UP THE SEA!

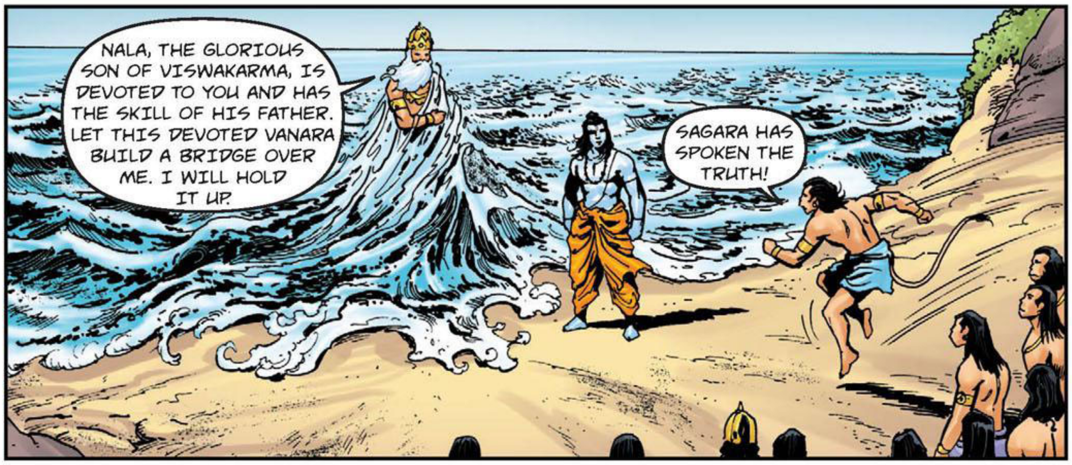

THEN, RAMA AIMED THE DEADLY BRAHMASTRA.
YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND MY POWER, O ABODE OF RAKSHASAS! I SHALL CONSUME YOUR WATER WITH MY ARROWS.
A VAST STRETCH OF SAND WILL APPEAR, AND THE CREATURES INHABITING YOU WILL BE WIPED OUT. YOU SHALL SURELY SUFFER AGONY AT MY HANDS!

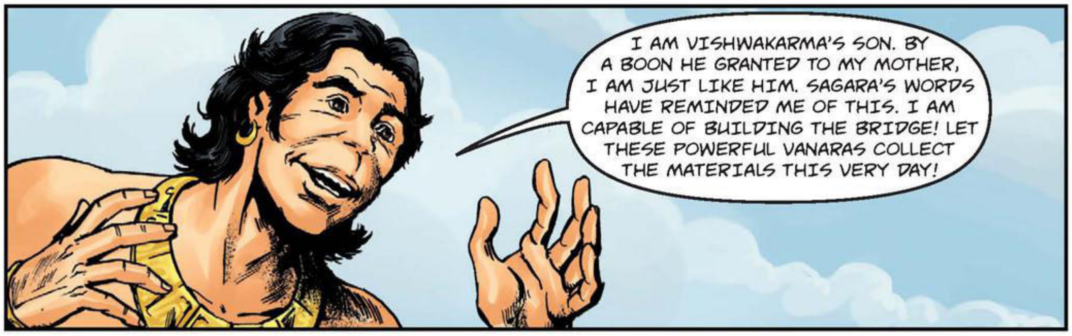

SAGARA EMWERGED FROM THE WATERS.
O GENTLE RAGHAVA, EARTH, AIR, ETHER, WATER AND FIRE MUST REMAIN FIXED, ABIDING BY THE ETERNAL LAW. I AM BY NATURE FATHOMLESS AND INCAPABLE OF BEING CROSSED. THERE IS NO WAY THAT I CAN ALLOW MY WATERS TO BECOME SOLID.


BUT I WILL PROVIDE THE VANARAS WITH A PLACE TO CROSS OVER. I SHALL BEAR THEIR WEIGHT, AND THE CROCODILES WILL NOT ATTACK THEM.
THIS MIGHTY ARROW CANNOT BE RECALLED, O SAGARA. WHERE SHOULD IT BE AIMED?


TO MY NORTH, THERE IS A WELL-KNOWN HOLY PLACE CALLED DRUMAKULYA. THERE LIVE A GROUP OF SINFUL THIEVING PEOPLE. I CANNOT BEAR MY WATERS BEING DRUNK BY SUCH SINNERS. YOU MAY SEND THIS EXCELLENT ARROW TO THAT PLACE.

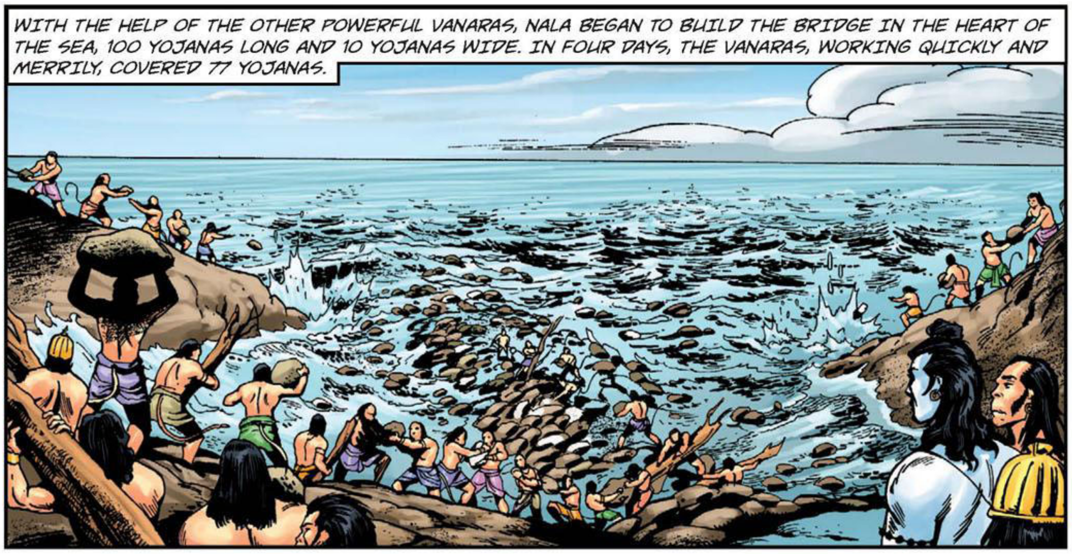

RAMA LET FLY THAT FLAMING BRAHMASTRA, WHICH LANDED IN THE REGION CALLED MARU* AND DRIED UP ALL THE WATER. THEN RAMA BLESSED THAT LAND, SAYING –
THIS WILL BE A HEALTHY LAND, FULL OF COWS, GHEE, MILK, FRUIT, ROOTS, HONEY AND ALL KINDS OF FRAGRANT HERBS!


NALA, THE GLORIOUS SON OF VISWAKARMA, IS DEVOTED TO YOU AND HAS THE SKILL OF HIS FATHER. LET THIS DEVOTED VANARA BUILD A BRIDGE OVER ME. I WILL HOLD IT UP.
SAGARA HAS SPOKEN THE TRUTH!

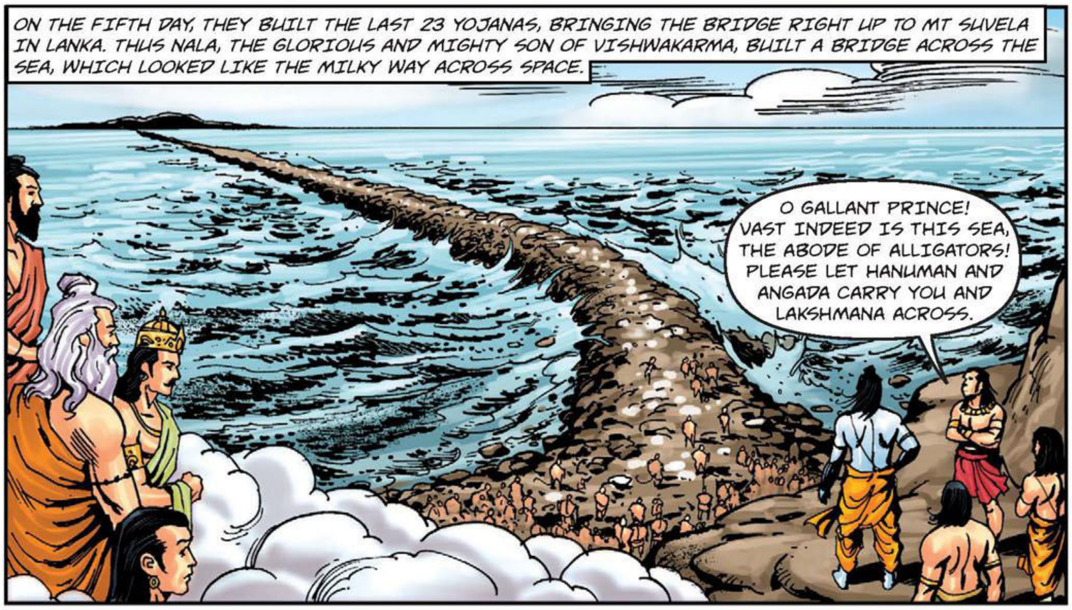

I AM VISHWAKARMA'S SON. BY A BOON HE GRANTED TO MY MOTHER, I AM JUST LIKE HIM. SAGARA'S WORDS HAVE REMINDED ME OF THIS. I AM CAPABLE OF BUILDING THE BRIDGE! LET THESE POWERFUL VANARAS COLLECT THE MATERIALS THIS VERY DAY!

*MARU MEANS DESERT, BELIEVED TO BE THE MARWAR REGION IN RAJASTHAN.

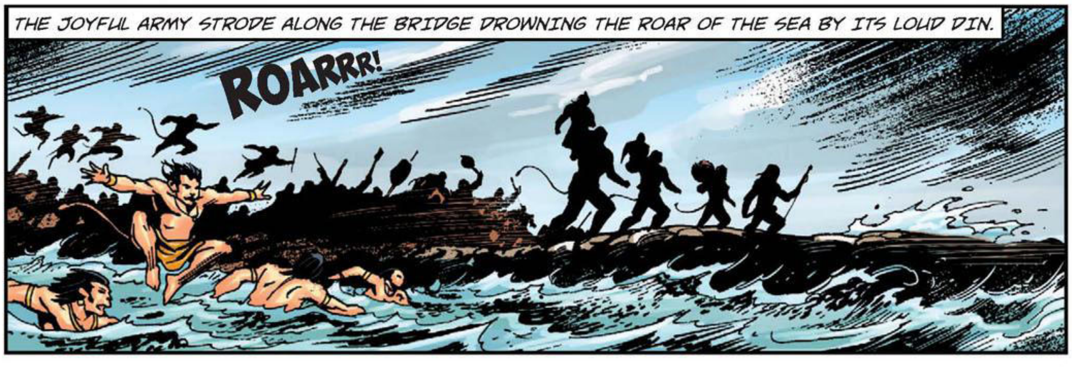
WITH THE HELP OF THE OTHER POWERFUL VANARAS, NALA BEGAN TO BUILD THE BRIDGE IN THE HEART OF THE SEA, 100 YOJANAS LONG AND 10 YOJANAS WIDE. IN FOUR DAYS, THE VANARAS, WORKING QUICKLY AND MERRILY, COVERED 77 YOJANAS.



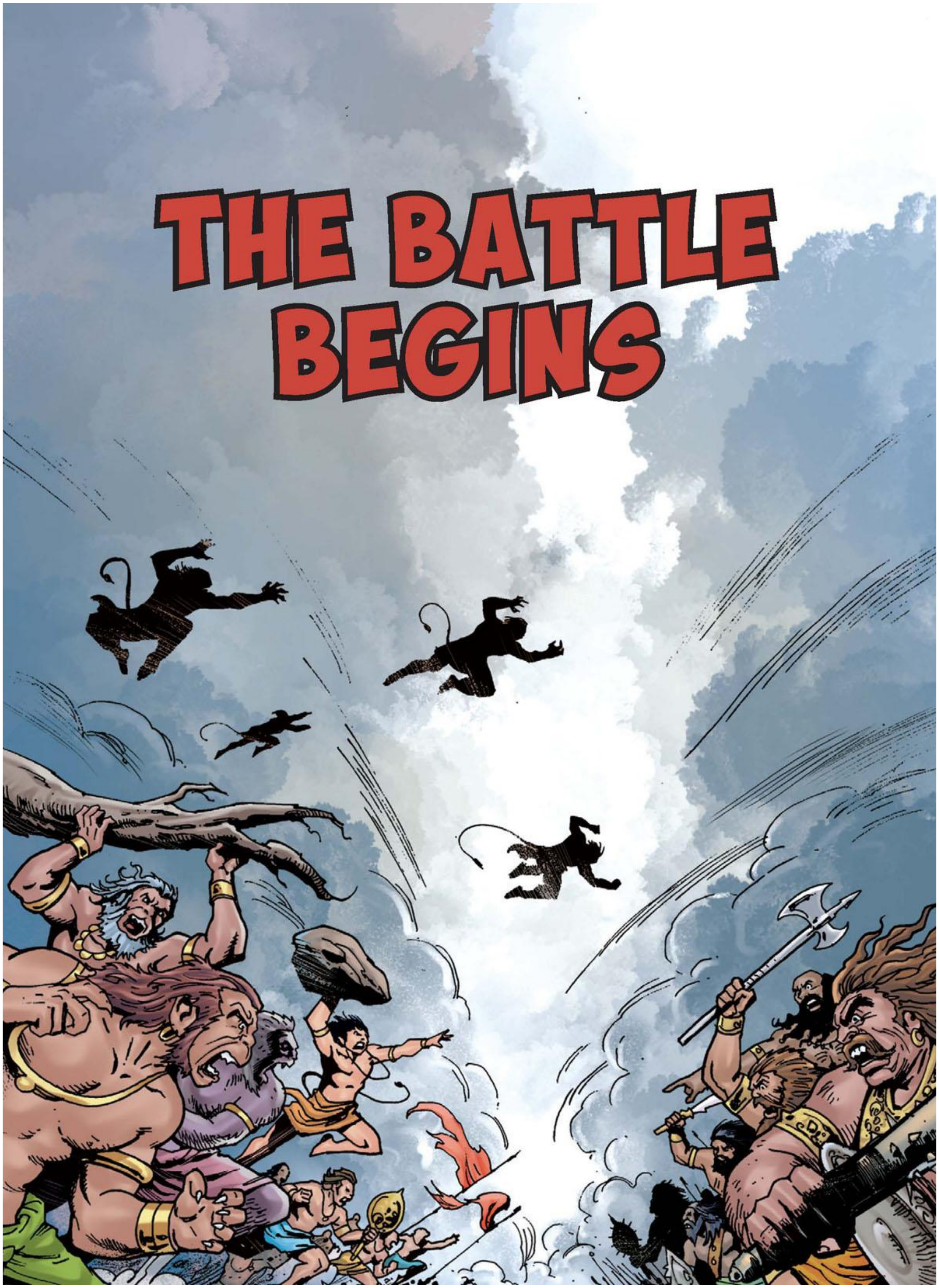
ON THE FIFTH DAY, THEY BUILT THE LAST 23 YOJANAS, BRINGING THE BRIDGE RIGHT UP TO MT SUVELA IN LANKA. THUS NALA, THE GLORIOUS AND MIGHTY SON OF VISHWAKARMA, BUILT A BRIDGE ACROSS THE SEA, WHICH LOOKED LIKE THE MILKY WAY ACROSS SPACE.


O GALLANT PRINCE! VAST INDEED IS THIS SEA, THE ABODE OF ALLIGATORS! PLEASE LET HANUMAN AND ANGADA CARRY YOU AND LAKSHMANA ACROSS.

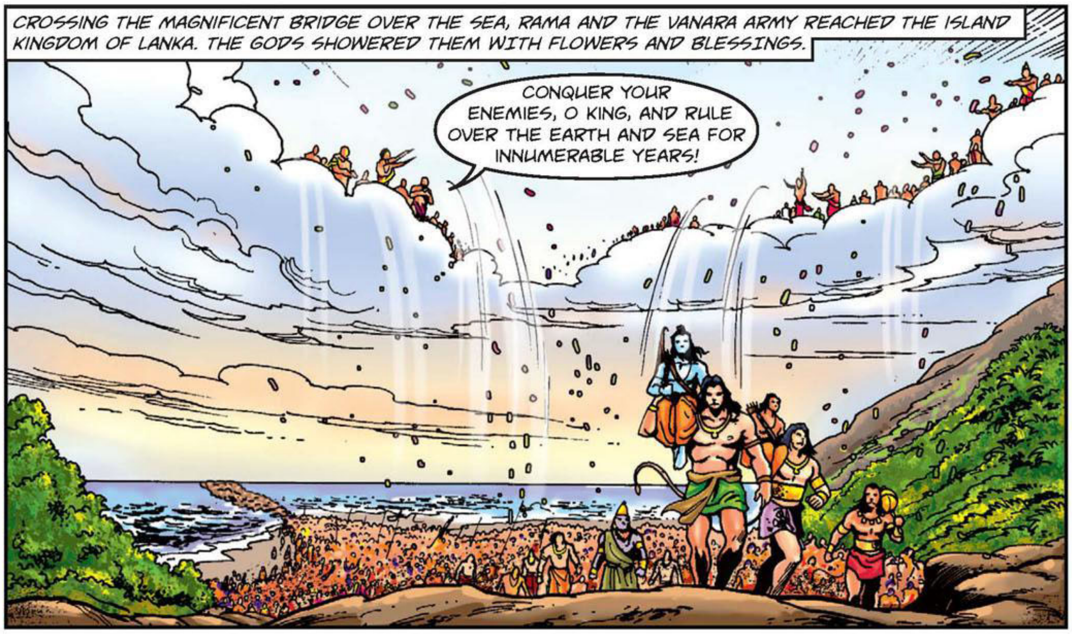
THE JOYFUL ARMY STRODE ALONG THE BRIDGE DROWNING THE ROAR OF THE SEA BY ITS LOUD DIN.



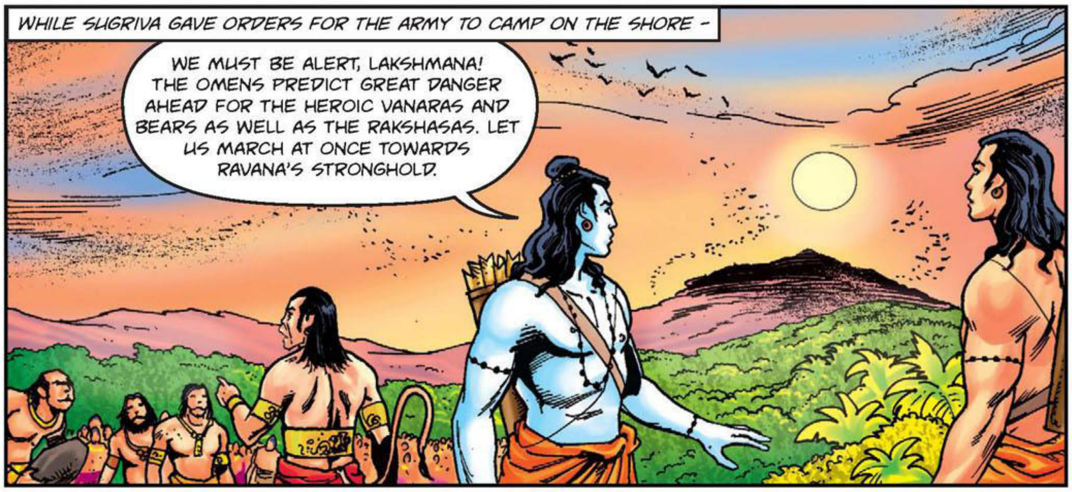
THE BATTLE BEGINS



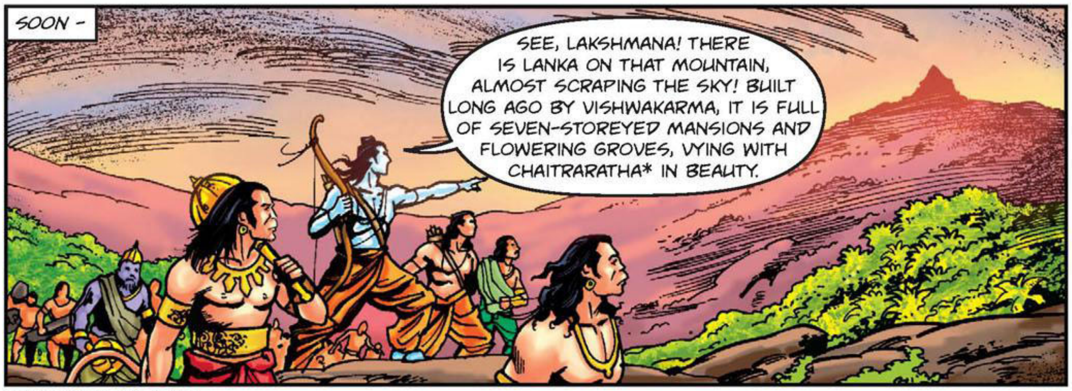
CROSSING THE MAGNIFICENT BRIDGE OVER THE SEA, RAMA AND THE VANARA ARMY REACHED THE ISLAND KINGDOM OF LANKA. THE GODS SHOWERED THEM WITH FLOWERS AND BLESSINGS.


CONQUER YOUR ENEMIES, O KING, AND RULE OVER THE EARTH AND SEA FOR INNUMERABLE YEARS!

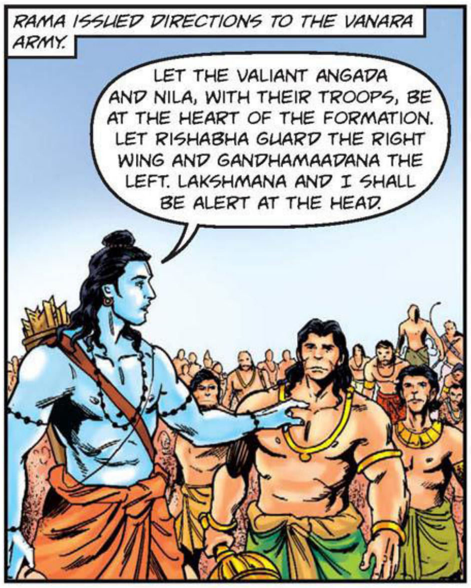
WHILE SUGRIVA GAVE ORDERS FOR THE ARMY TO CAMP ON THE SHORE -

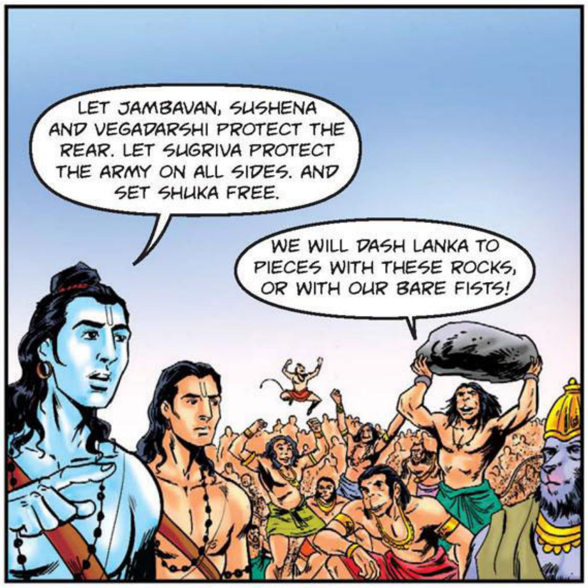

WE MUST BE ALERT, LAKSHMANA! THE OMENS PREDICT GREAT DANGER AHEAD FOR THE HEROIC VANARAS AND BEARS AS WELL AS THE RAKSHASAS. LET US MARCH AT ONCE TOWARDS RAVANA'S STRONGHOLD.

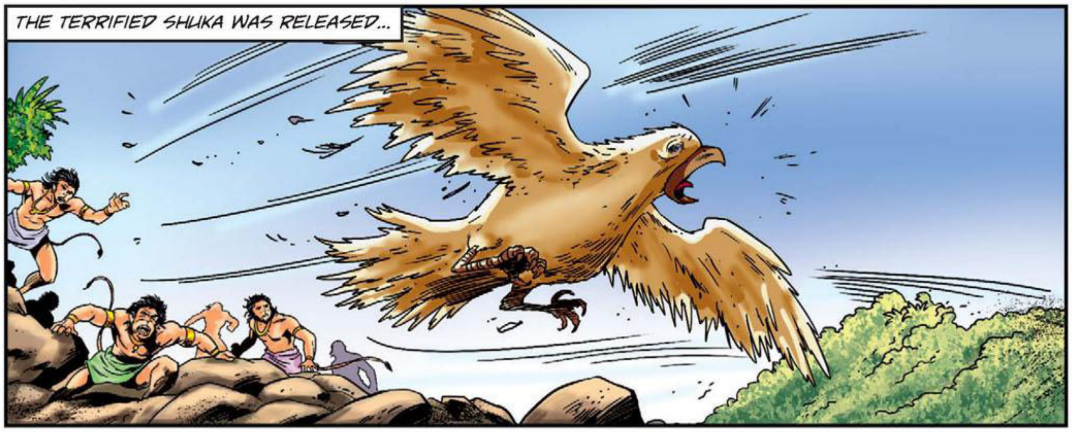
SOON -

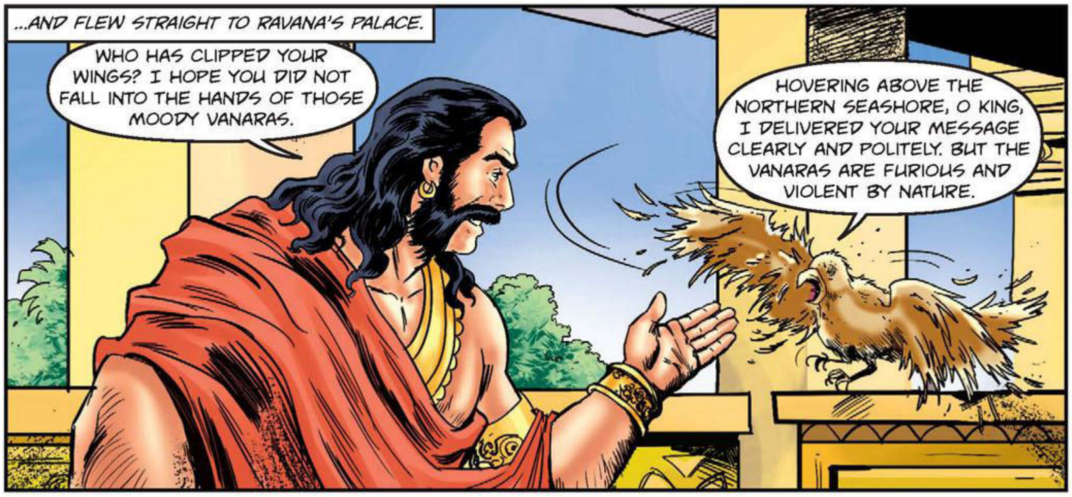

SEE, LAKSHMANA! THERE IS LANKA ON THAT MOUNTAIN, ALMOST SCRAPING THE SKY! BUILT LONG AGO BY VISHWAKARMA, IT IS FULL OF SEVEN-STOREYED MANSIONS AND FLOWERING GROVES, VYING WITH CHAITRARATHA* IN BEAUTY.

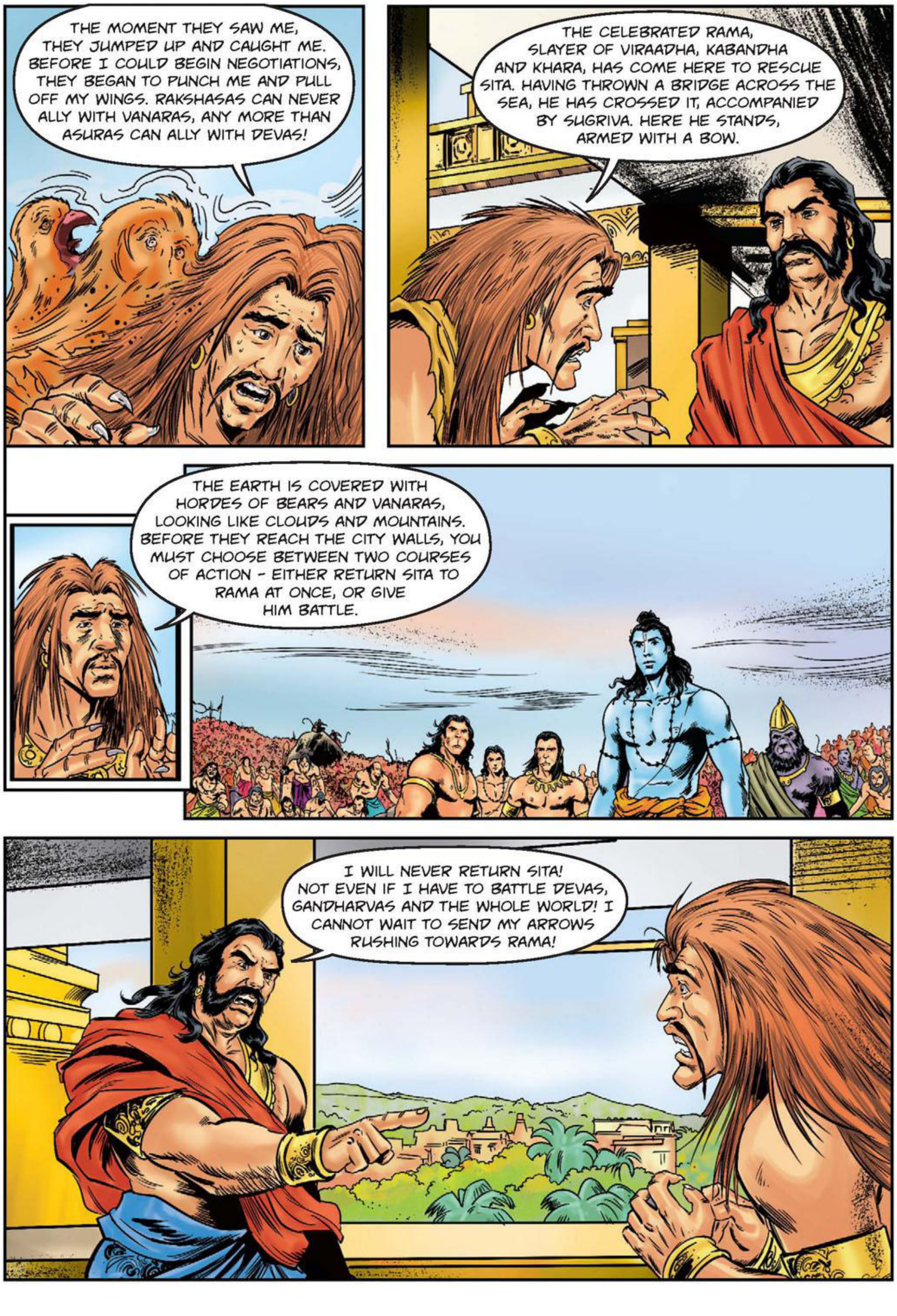
*KUBERA'S GARDEN

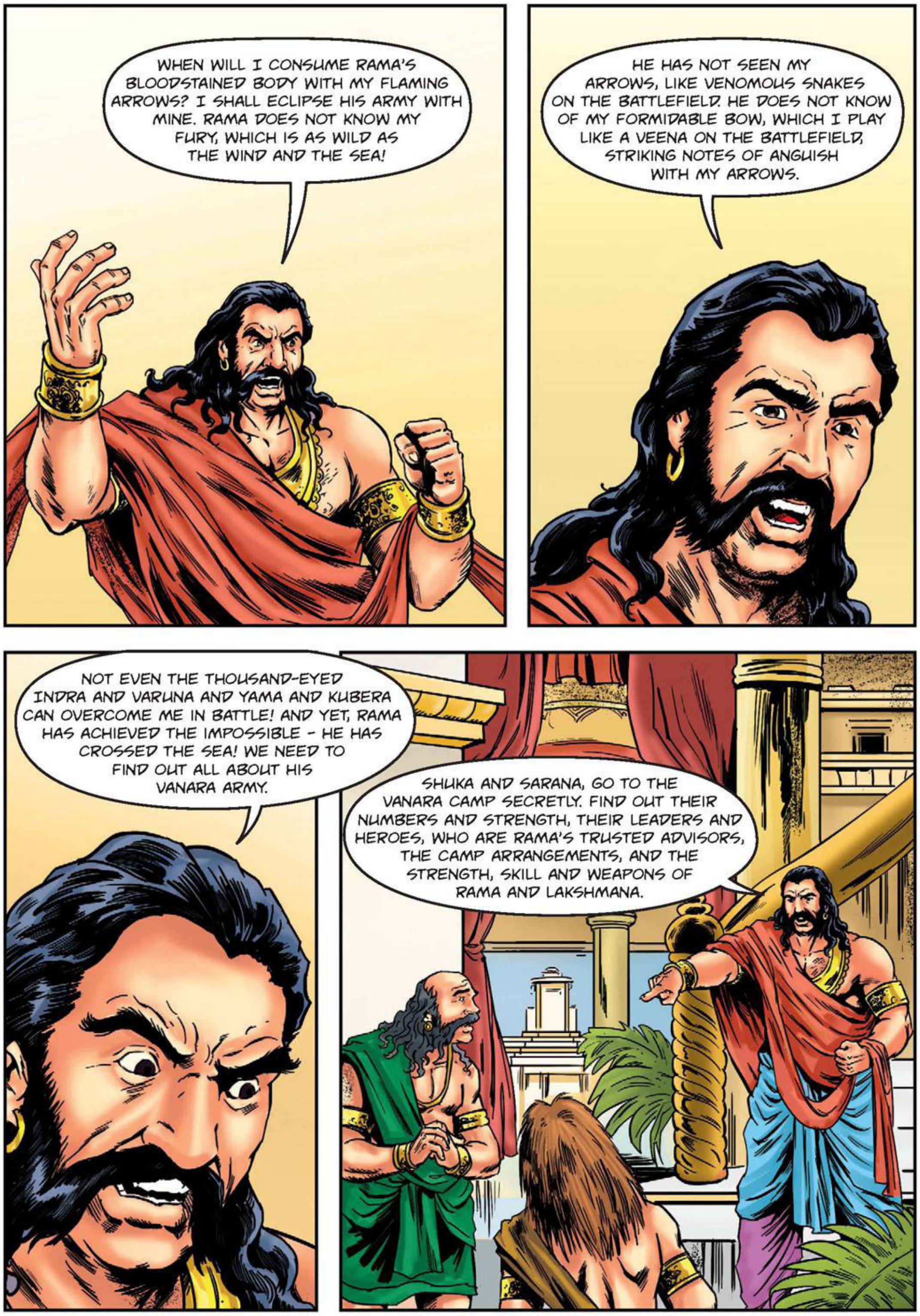

RAMA ISSUED DIRECTIONS TO THE VANARA ARMY.
LET THE VALIANT ANGADA AND NILA, WITH THEIR TROOPS, BE AT THE HEART OF THE FORMATION. LET RISHABHA GUARD THE RIGHT WING AND GANDHAMAADANA THE LEFT. LAKSHMANA AND I SHALL BE ALERT AT THE HEAD.

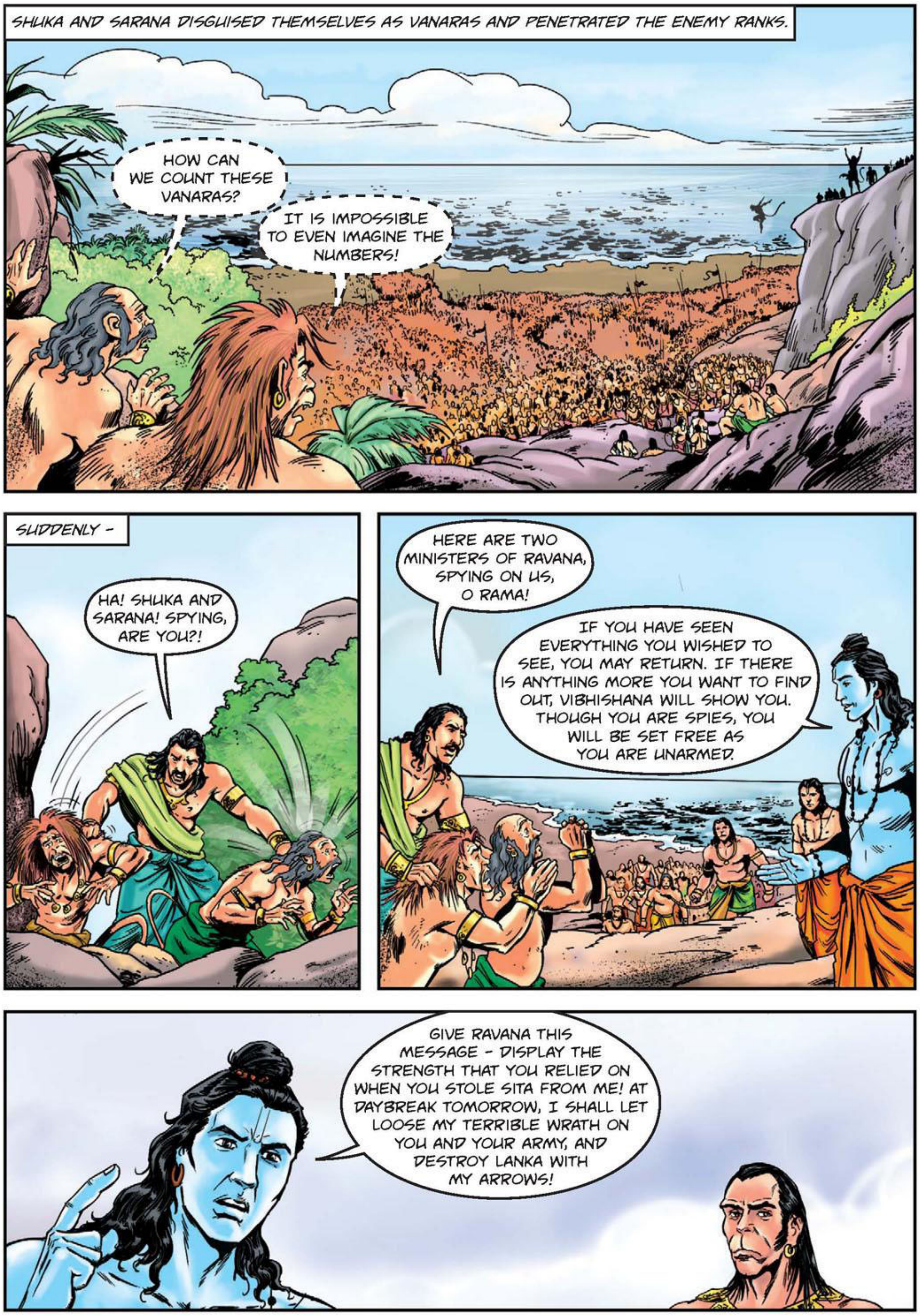

LET JAMBAVAN, SUSHENA AND VEGADARSHI PROTECT THE REAR. LET SUGRIVA PROTECT THE ARMY ON ALL SIDES. AND SET SHUKA FREE.
WE WILL DASH LANKA TO PIECES WITH THESE ROCKS, OR WITH OUR BARE FISTS!

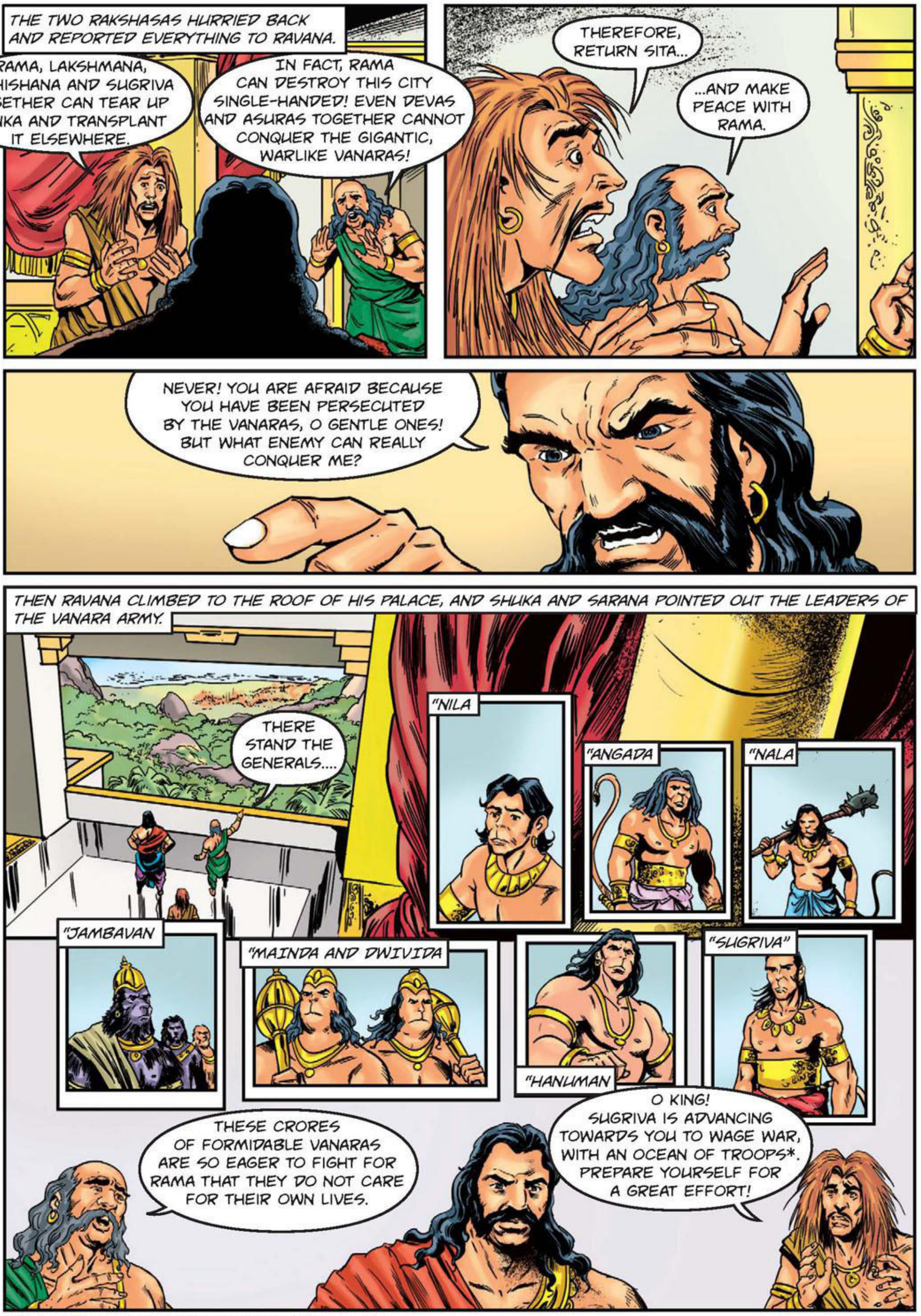

THE TERRIFIED SHUKA WAS RELEASED...


...AND FLEW STRAIGHT TO RAVANA'S PALACE.
WHO HAS CLIPPED YOUR WINGS? I HOPE YOU DID NOT FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE MOODY VANARAS.
HOVERING ABOVE THE NORTHERN SEASHORE, O KING, I DELIVERED YOUR MESSAGE CLEARLY AND POLITELY. BUT THE VANARAS ARE FURIOUS AND VIOLENT BY NATURE.


THE MOMENT THEY SAW ME, THEY JUMPED UP AND CAUGHT ME. BEFORE I COULD BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS, THEY BEGAN TO PUNCH ME AND PULL OFF MY WINGS. RAKSHASAS CAN NEVER ALLY WITH VANARAS, ANY MORE THAN ASURAS CAN ALLY WITH DEVAS!
THE CELEBRATED RAMA, SLAYER OF VIRAADHA, KABANDHA AND KHARA, HAS COME HERE TO RESCUE SITA. HAVING THROWN A BRIDGE ACROSS THE SEA, HE HAS CROSSED IT, ACCOMPANIED BY SUGRIVA. HERE HE STANDS, ARMED WITH A BOW.
THE EARTH IS COVERED WITH HORDES OF BEARS AND VANARAS, LOOKING LIKE CLOUDS AND MOUNTAINS. BEFORE THEY REACH THE CITY WALLS, YOU MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO COURSES OF ACTION - EITHER RETURN SITA TO RAMA AT ONCE, OR GIVE HIM BATTLE.
I WILL NEVER RETURN SITA! NOT EVEN IF I HAVE TO BATTLE DEVAS, GANDHARVAS AND THE WHOLE WORLD! I CANNOT WAIT TO SEND MY ARROWS RUSHING TOWARDS RAMA!


WHEN WILL I CONSUME RAMA'S BLOODSTAINED BODY WITH MY FLAMING ARROWS? I SHALL ECLIPSE HIS ARMY WITH MINE. RAMA DOES NOT KNOW MY FURY, WHICH IS AS WILD AS THE WIND AND THE SEA!
HE HAS NOT SEEN MY ARROWS, LIKE VENOMOUS SNAKES ON THE BATTLEFIELD. HE DOES NOT KNOW OF MY FORMIDABLE BOW, WHICH I PLAY LIKE A VEENA ON THE BATTLEFIELD, STRIKING NOTES OF ANGUISH WITH MY ARROWS.
NOT EVEN THE THOUSAND-EYED INDRA AND VARUNA AND YAMA AND KUBERA CAN OVERCOME ME IN BATTLE! AND YET, RAMA HAS ACHIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE - HE HAS CROSSED THE SEA! WE NEED TO FIND OUT ALL ABOUT HIS VANARA ARMY.
SHUKA AND SARANA, GO TO THE VANARA CAMP SECRETLY. FIND OUT THEIR NUMBERS AND STRENGTH, THEIR LEADERS AND HEROES, WHO ARE RAMA'S TRUSTED ADVISORS, THE CAMP ARRANGEMENTS, AND THE STRENGTH, SKILL AND WEAPONS OF RAMA AND LAKSHMANA.


SHUKA AND SARANA DISGUISED THEMSELVES AS VANARAS AND PENETRATED THE ENEMY RANKS.
HOW CAN WE COUNT THESE VANARAS?
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO EVEN IMAGINE THE NUMBERS!
SUDDENLY -
HA! SHUKA AND SARANA! SPYING, ARE YOU?!
HERE ARE TWO MINISTERS OF RAVANA, SPYING ON US, O RAMA!
IF YOU HAVE SEEN EVERYTHING YOU WISHED TO SEE, YOU MAY RETURN. IF THERE IS ANYTHING MORE YOU WANT TO FIND OUT, VIBHISHANA WILL SHOW YOU. THOUGH YOU ARE SPIES, YOU WILL BE SET FREE AS YOU ARE UNARMED.
GIVE RAVANA THIS MESSAGE - DISPLAY THE STRENGTH THAT YOU RELIED ON WHEN YOU STOLE SITA FROM ME! AT DAYBREAK TOMORROW, I SHALL LET LOOSE MY TERRIBLE WRATH ON YOU AND YOUR ARMY, AND DESTROY LANKA WITH MY ARROWS!


THE TWO RAKSHASAS HURRIED BACK AND REPORTED EVERYTHING TO RAVANA.
RAMA, LAKSHMANA, VIBHISHANA AND SUGRIVA TOGETHER CAN TEAR UP LANKA AND TRANSPLANT IT ELSEWHERE.
IN FACT, RAMA CAN DESTROY THIS CITY SINGLE-HANDED! EVEN DEVAS AND ASURAS TOGETHER CANNOT CONQUER THE GIGANTIC, WARLIKE VANARAS!
THEREFORE, RETURN SITA...
...AND MAKE PEACE WITH RAMA.
NEVER! YOU ARE AFRAID BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN PERSECUTED BY THE VANARAS, O GENTLE ONES! BUT WHAT ENEMY CAN REALLY CONQUER ME?
THEN RAVANA CLIMBED TO THE ROOF OF HIS PALACE, AND SHUKA AND SARANA POINTED OUT THE LEADERS OF THE VANARA ARMY.
THERE STAND THE GENERALS....
"NILA
"ANGADA
"NALA
"JAMBAVAN
"MAINDA AND DWIVIDA
"HANUMAN
"SUGRIVA"
THESE CRORES OF FORMIDABLE VANARAS ARE SO EAGER TO FIGHT FOR RAMA THAT THEY DO NOT CARE FOR THEIR OWN LIVES.
O KING! SUGRIVA IS ADVANCING TOWARDS YOU TO WAGE WAR, WITH AN OCEAN OF TROOPS*. PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A GREAT EFFORT!

*SEE P. 43 FOR SARANA'S DESCRIPTION OF THE ANCIENT INDIAN NUMERAL SYSTEM

HEROES OF RAMA'S ARMY

Rama's army was full of great warriors. There were ten crore vanaras leaders, all sons of devas. Here are some of them, as described to Ravana by his spies – Shuka, Sarana, and Shardoola.

Sugriva, king of the vanaras, is the son of Riksharaja and younger brother of Vali. He lives in Kishkinda and is the most glorious vanara.

Nila, son of Agni (the god of fire), is the commander-in-chief of the army.

Angada is the grandson of Indra (king of the gods), son of Vali, and trusted nephew of Sugriva. He was the one responsible for Hanuman reaching Lanka.

Nala, son of Vishwakarma (architect of the gods), is the builder of the bridge across the sea.

Hanuman, son of Vayu and foster son of Kesari, is the strongest, most handsome and most intelligent vanara.

Kumuda is a vanara king from a country on the bank of the river Gomati, on Mt Samrochana.

Sarabha, a son of Yama, lives on Mt Shaalveya and is the chief of the mighty Vihara vanaras.

Krathana, son of Visravasa, sits beneath the Jambu tree on a huge mountain frequented by Kinnaras near Mt Kailasha.

Dhumra, the lord of the bears, is the son of Gadgada. He lives on Mt. Rikshavan and drinks the waters of the river Narmada.

Jambavan, who was born of Brahma's sneeze, is also the foster son of Gadgada, and Dhumra's younger brother. He fought for Indra against the asuras and won many boons from him.

Samnadana is the grandfather of all vanaras. He once fought against Indra and was not defeated.

Pramathi lives in the caves of Mt Mandara and Mt Usheerabeeja. He roams on the banks of the river Ganga, terrorising wild elephants, who were once enemies of the vanaras.

Kesari is the son of Bruhaspati, Indra's guru. He lives on Mt Kanchana*, around which the sun revolves.

Mainda and **Dwivida** are sons of the Ashwins, the twin physicians of the gods.

Gaja, Gavaksha, Gavaya, Gandhamandana and **Sushena** are sons of Yama.

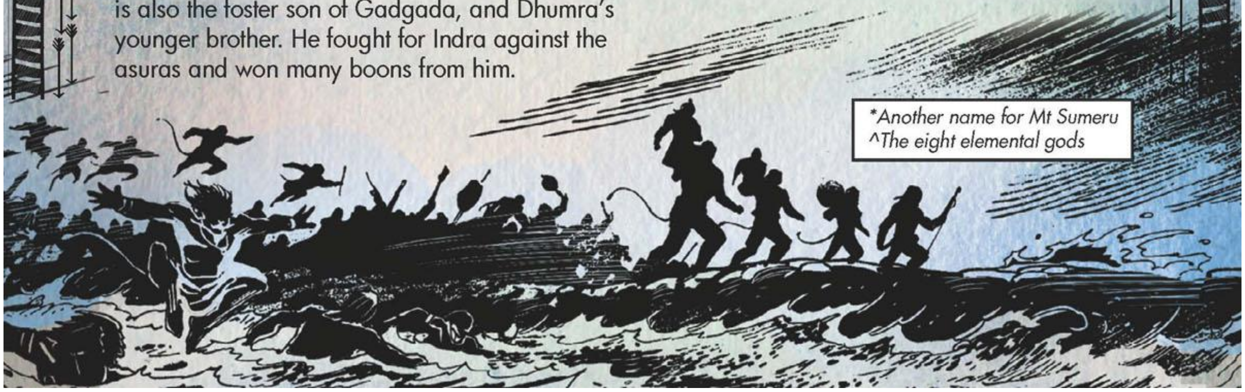
Dadhimukha is a son of Soma, the moon god.

Sumukha, Durmukha and **Vegadarshi** are embodiments of death, created by Brahma.

Shweta and **Jyotirmukha** are sons of Surya.

Hemakuta is a son of Varuna.

Durdhara is a son of the Vasus^.



**Another name for Mt Sumeru*

^The eight elemental gods

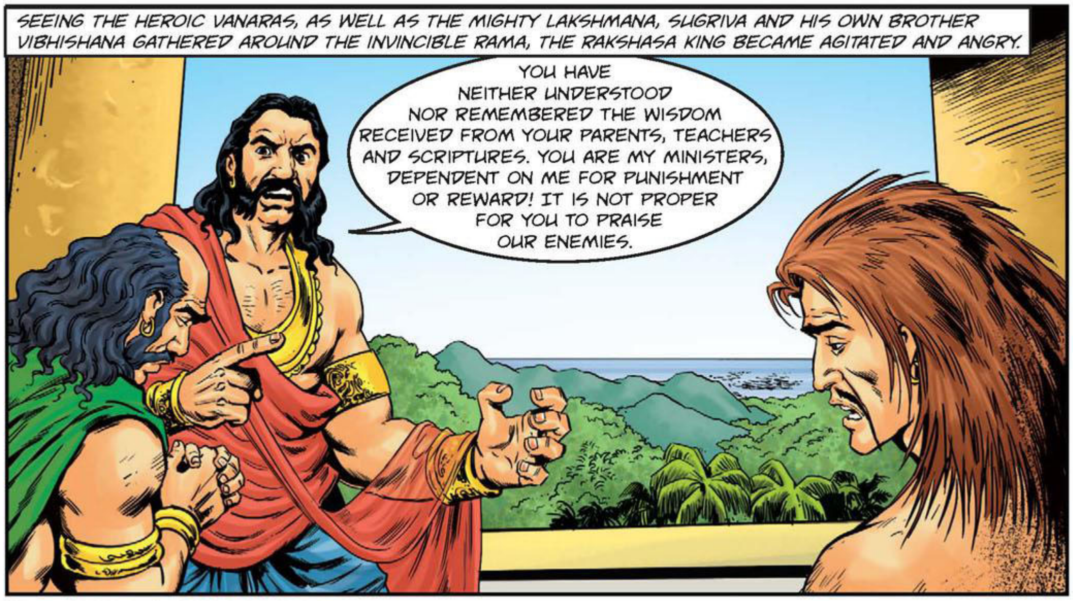
RAMA'S ARMY ACCORDING TO THE INDIAN SYSTEM OF NUMBERS

The largest number in the ancient Indian number system was a Mahaogha, which was:
100000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000
– that's one, followed by 62 zeros!

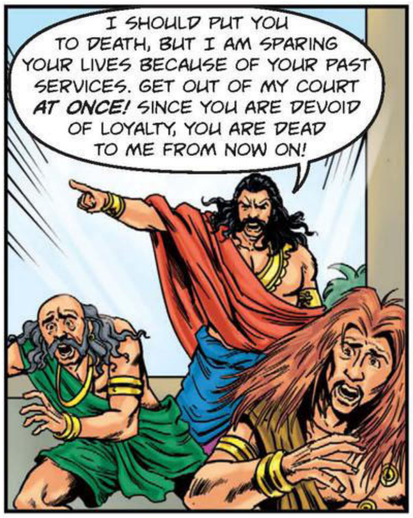
Sarana describes the system in detail to Ravana in this way:

"Wise people say that a hundred lakhs* is a **crore**,
while a hundred thousand crores is called a **shanku**.
A hundred thousand shankus is called a **mahashanku**.
A hundred thousand mahashankus is called a **vrunda**.
A hundred thousand vrundas is known as a **mahavrunda**.
A hundred thousand mahavrundas is known as a **padma**.
A hundred thousand padmas is a **mahapadma**.
A hundred thousand mahapadmas is called a **kharva**.
A hundred thousand kharvas is known as a **mahakharva**,
and a hundred thousand mahakharvas is known as a **samudra**.
A hundred thousand samudras is called an **ogha**.
A hundred thousand oghas is a called a **mahaogha**."

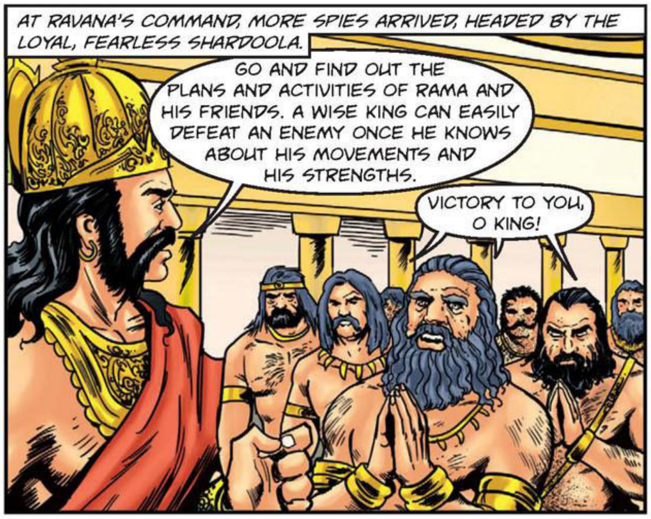
Then Sarana goes on to say: "The mighty Sugriva is advancing towards you to wage war, with an army numbering a hundred thousand crores of shankus, a thousand mahashankus, a hundred vrindas, a thousand mahavrindas, a hundred padmas, a thousand mahapadmas, a hundred kharvas, a hundred samudras and a hundred mahaoghas, and a crore of mahaoghas, which is identical to an ocean." It was a formidable army!


SEEING THE HEROIC VANARAS, AS WELL AS THE MIGHTY LAKSHMANA, SUGRIVA AND HIS OWN BROTHER VIBHISHANA GATHERED AROUND THE INVINCIBLE RAMA, THE RAKSHASA KING BECAME AGITATED AND ANGRY.
YOU HAVE NEITHER UNDERSTOOD NOR REMEMBERED THE WISDOM RECEIVED FROM YOUR PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SCRIPTURES. YOU ARE MY MINISTERS, DEPENDENT ON ME FOR PUNISHMENT OR REWARD! IT IS NOT PROPER FOR YOU TO PRAISE OUR ENEMIES.

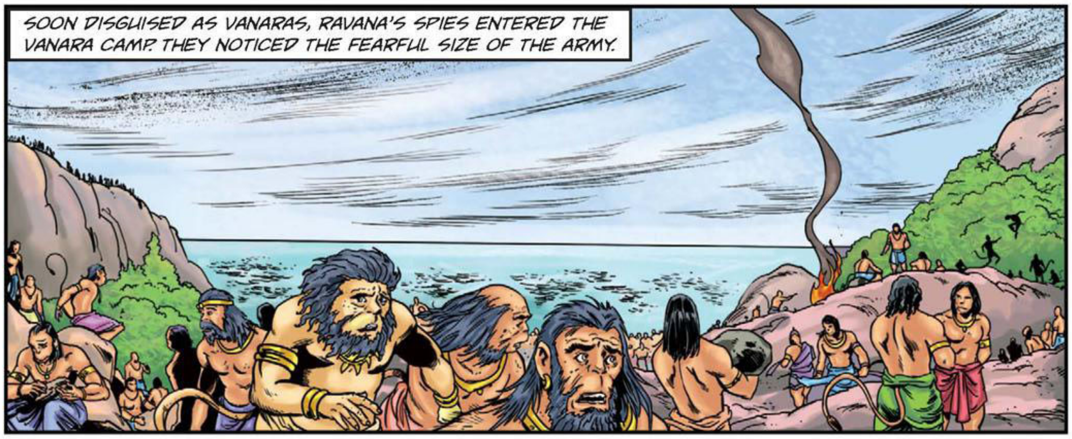
*A LAKH IS A HUNDRED THOUSAND


I SHOULD PUT YOU TO DEATH, BUT I AM SPARING YOUR LIVES BECAUSE OF YOUR PAST SERVICES. GET OUT OF MY COURT **AT ONCE!** SINCE YOU ARE DEVOID OF LOYALTY, YOU ARE DEAD TO ME FROM NOW ON!

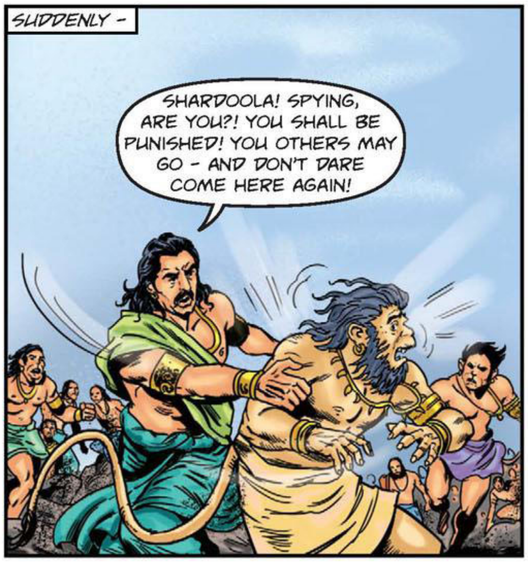
AT RAVANA'S COMMAND, MORE SPIES ARRIVED, HEADED BY THE LOYAL, FEARLESS SHARDOOLA.


GO AND FIND OUT THE PLANS AND ACTIVITIES OF RAMA AND HIS FRIENDS. A WISE KING CAN EASILY DEFEAT AN ENEMY ONCE HE KNOWS ABOUT HIS MOVEMENTS AND HIS STRENGTHS.
VICTORY TO YOU, O KING!

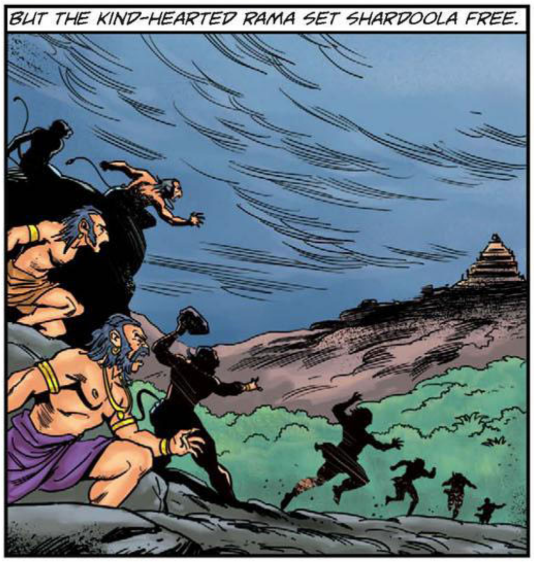
SOON DISGUISED AS VANARAS, RAVANA'S SPIES ENTERED THE VANARA CAMP. THEY NOTICED THE FEARFUL SIZE OF THE ARMY.

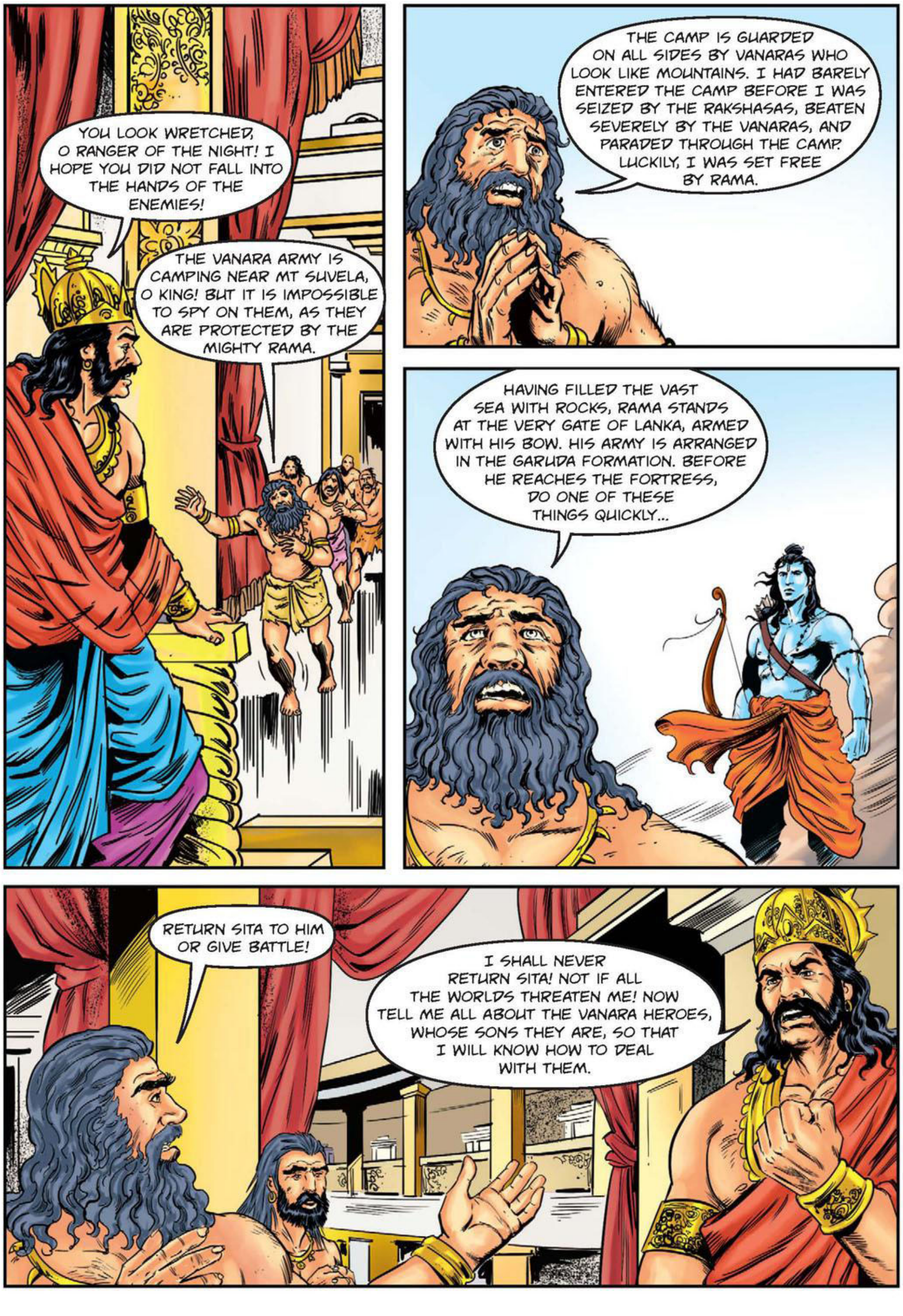


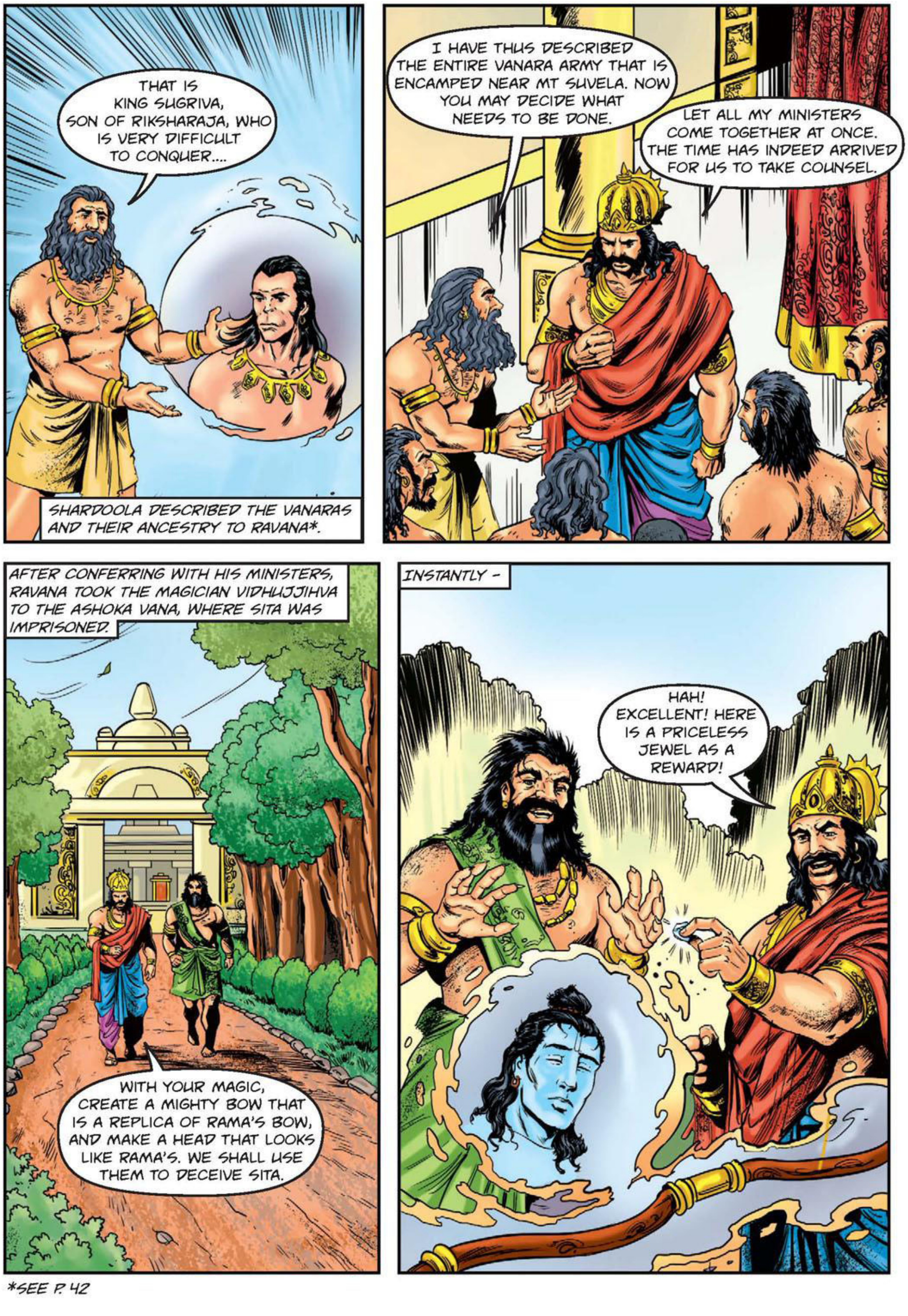
SUDDENLY –


SHARDOOLA! SPYING, ARE YOU?! YOU SHALL BE PUNISHED! YOU OTHERS MAY GO – AND DON'T DARE COME HERE AGAIN!

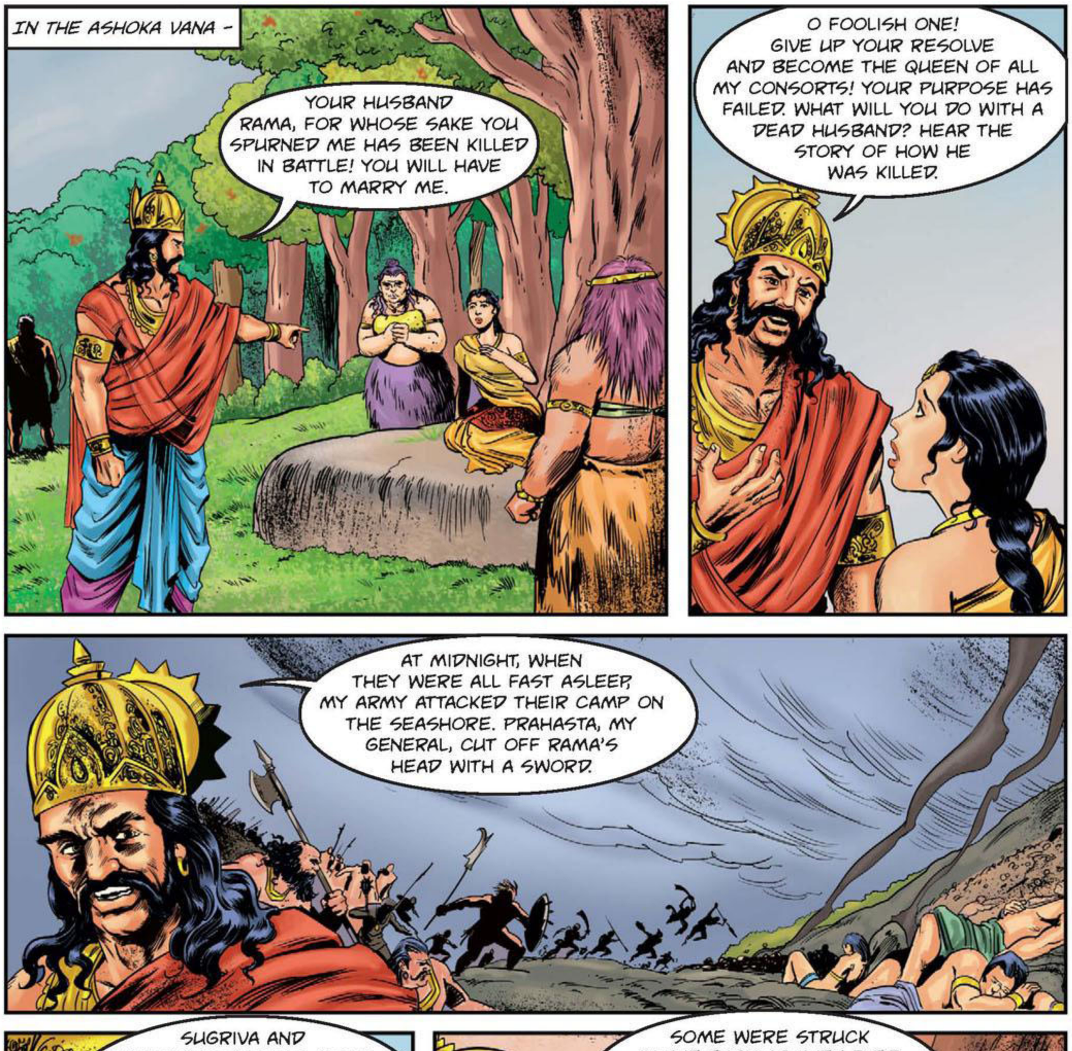
BUT THE KIND-HEARTED RAMA SET SHARDOOLA FREE.

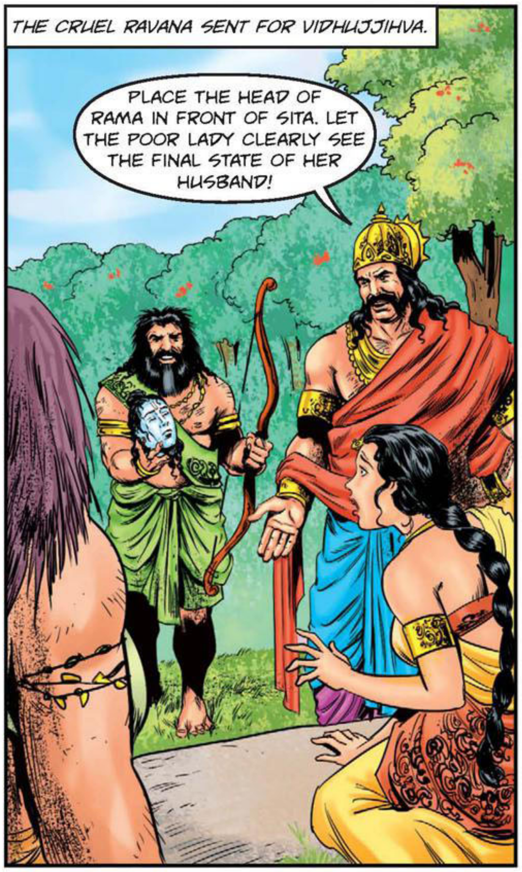


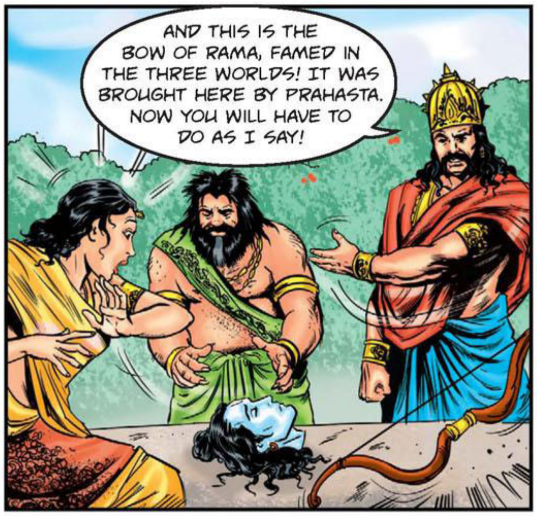

YOU LOOK WRETCHED, O RANGER OF THE NIGHT! I HOPE YOU DID NOT FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE ENEMIES!
THE VANARA ARMY IS CAMPING NEAR MT SUVELA, O KING! BUT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SPY ON THEM, AS THEY ARE PROTECTED BY THE MIGHTY RAMA.
THE CAMP IS GUARDED ON ALL SIDES BY VANARAS WHO LOOK LIKE MOUNTAINS. I HAD BARELY ENTERED THE CAMP BEFORE I WAS SEIZED BY THE RAKSHASAS, BEATEN SEVERELY BY THE VANARAS, AND PARADED THROUGH THE CAMP. LUCKILY, I WAS SET FREE BY RAMA.
HAVING FILLED THE VAST SEA WITH ROCKS, RAMA STANDS AT THE VERY GATE OF LANKA, ARMED WITH HIS BOW. HIS ARMY IS ARRANGED IN THE GARUDA FORMATION. BEFORE HE REACHES THE FORTRESS, DO ONE OF THESE THINGS QUICKLY...
RETURN SITA TO HIM OR GIVE BATTLE!
I SHALL NEVER RETURN SITA! NOT IF ALL THE WORLDS THREATEN ME! NOW TELL ME ALL ABOUT THE VANARA HEROES, WHOSE SONS THEY ARE, SO THAT I WILL KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM.

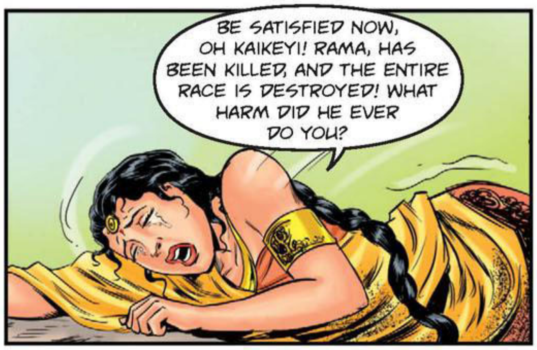

THAT IS KING SUGRIVA, SON OF RIKSHARAJA, WHO IS VERY DIFFICULT TO CONQUER....
SHARDOOLA DESCRIBED THE VANARAS AND THEIR ANCESTRY TO RAVANA*.
I HAVE THUS DESCRIBED THE ENTIRE VANARA ARMY THAT IS ENCAMPED NEAR MT SUVELA. NOW YOU MAY DECIDE WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.
LET ALL MY MINISTERS COME TOGETHER AT ONCE. THE TIME HAS INDEED ARRIVED FOR US TO TAKE COUNSEL.
AFTER CONFERRING WITH HIS MINISTERS, RAVANA TOOK THE MAGICIAN VIDHUJJIHVA TO THE ASHOKA VANA, WHERE SITA WAS IMPRISONED.
WITH YOUR MAGIC, CREATE A MIGHTY BOW THAT IS A REPLICA OF RAMA'S BOW, AND MAKE A HEAD THAT LOOKS LIKE RAMA'S. WE SHALL USE THEM TO DECEIVE SITA.
INSTANTLY –
HAH! EXCELLENT! HERE IS A PRICELESS JEWEL AS A REWARD!

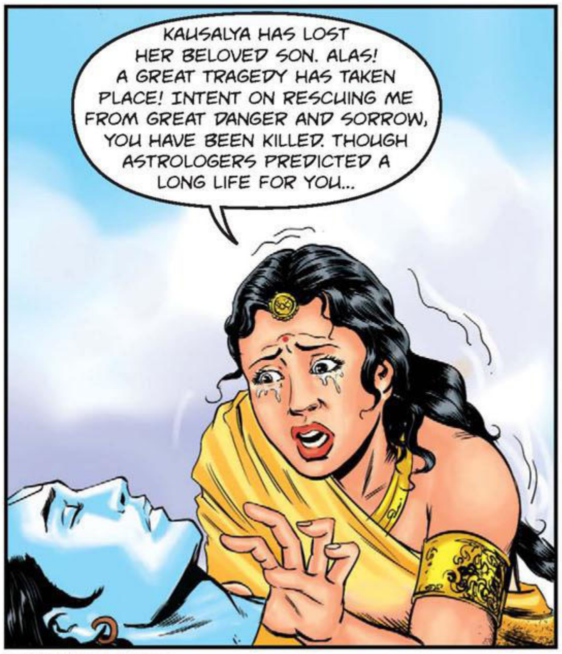
*SEE P. 42

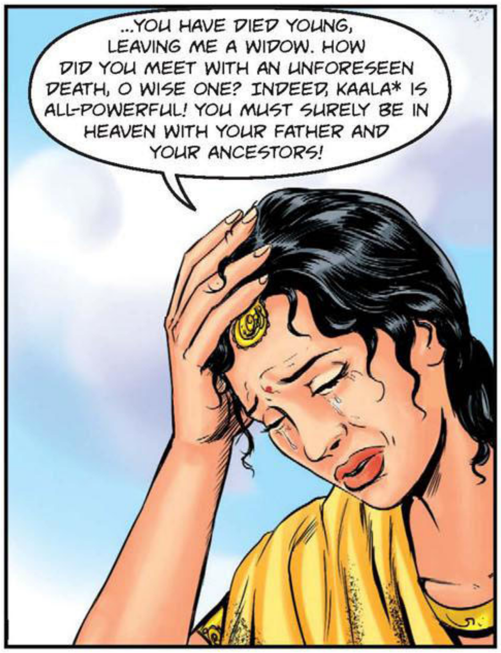

IN THE ASHOKA VANA -
YOUR HUSBAND RAMA, FOR WHOSE SAKE YOU SPURNED ME HAS BEEN KILLED IN BATTLE! YOU WILL HAVE TO MARRY ME.
O FOOLISH ONE! GIVE UP YOUR RESOLVE AND BECOME THE QUEEN OF ALL MY CONSORTS! YOUR PURPOSE HAS FAILED. WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH A DEAD HUSBAND? HEAR THE STORY OF HOW HE WAS KILLED.
AT MIDNIGHT, WHEN THEY WERE ALL FAST ASLEEP, MY ARMY ATTACKED THEIR CAMP ON THE SEASHORE. PRAHASTA, MY GENERAL, CUT OFF RAMA'S HEAD WITH A SWORD.
SUGRIVA AND HANUMAN ARE DEAD, ALONG WITH MANY OTHER POWERFUL VANARAS. LAKSHMANA AND THE SURVIVING VANARAS WERE FORCED TO FLEE IN ALL DIRECTIONS. SOME WERE CRUSHED BY ELEPHANTS.
SOME WERE STRUCK IN THE BACK AS THEY FLED, OTHERS PLUNGED INTO THE SEA. THE ENTIRE ARMY WAS DESTROYED ON THE SPOT. YOUR HUSBAND'S HEAD HAS BEEN BROUGHT HERE, COVERED IN BLOOD AND DUST.


THE CRUEL RAVANA SENT FOR VIDHUJJIHVA.
PLACE THE HEAD OF RAMA IN FRONT OF SITA. LET THE POOR LADY CLEARLY SEE THE FINAL STATE OF HER HUSBAND!

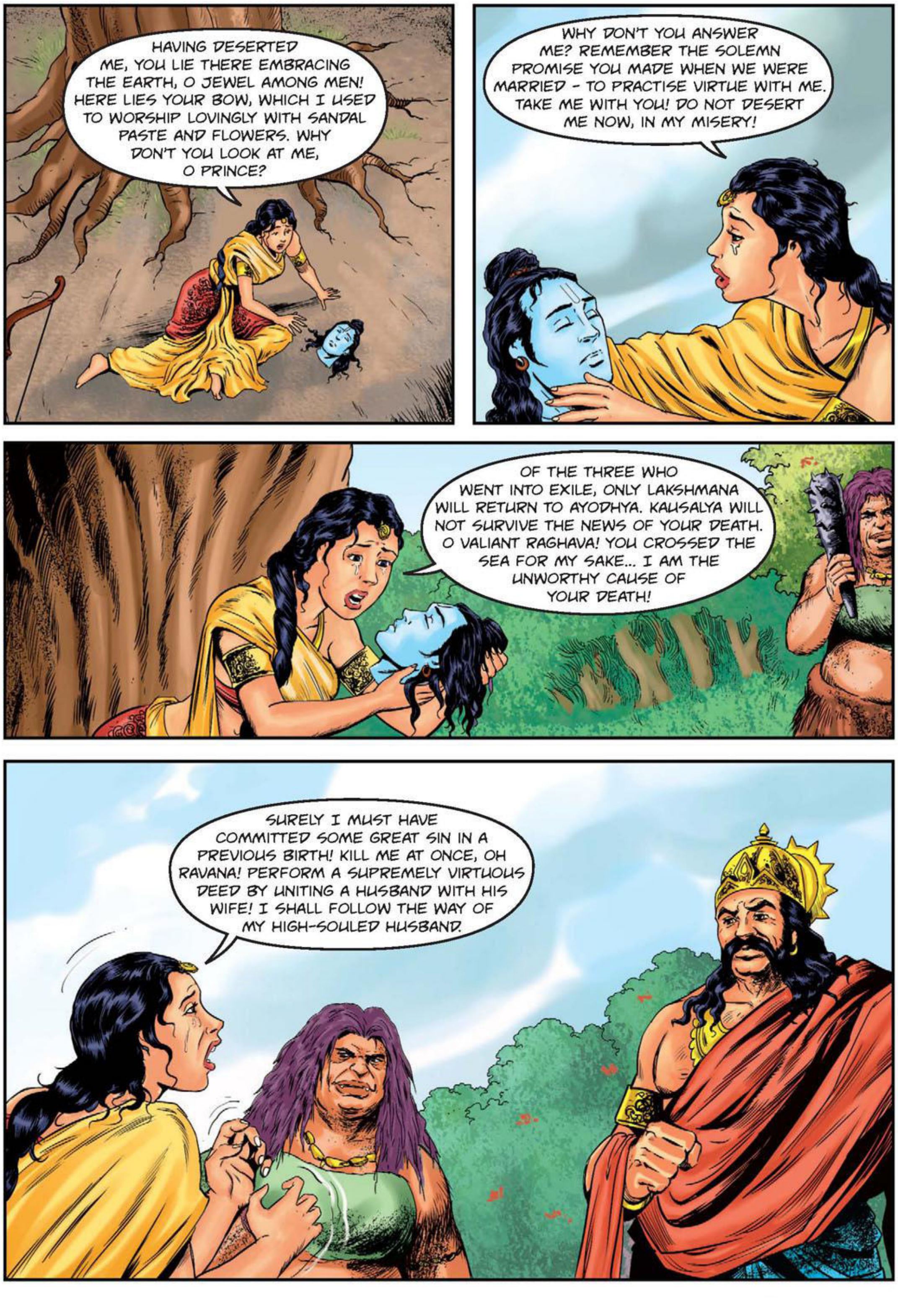

AND THIS IS THE BOW OF RAMA, FAMED IN THE THREE WORLDS! IT WAS BROUGHT HERE BY PRAHASTA. NOW YOU WILL HAVE TO DO AS I SAY!

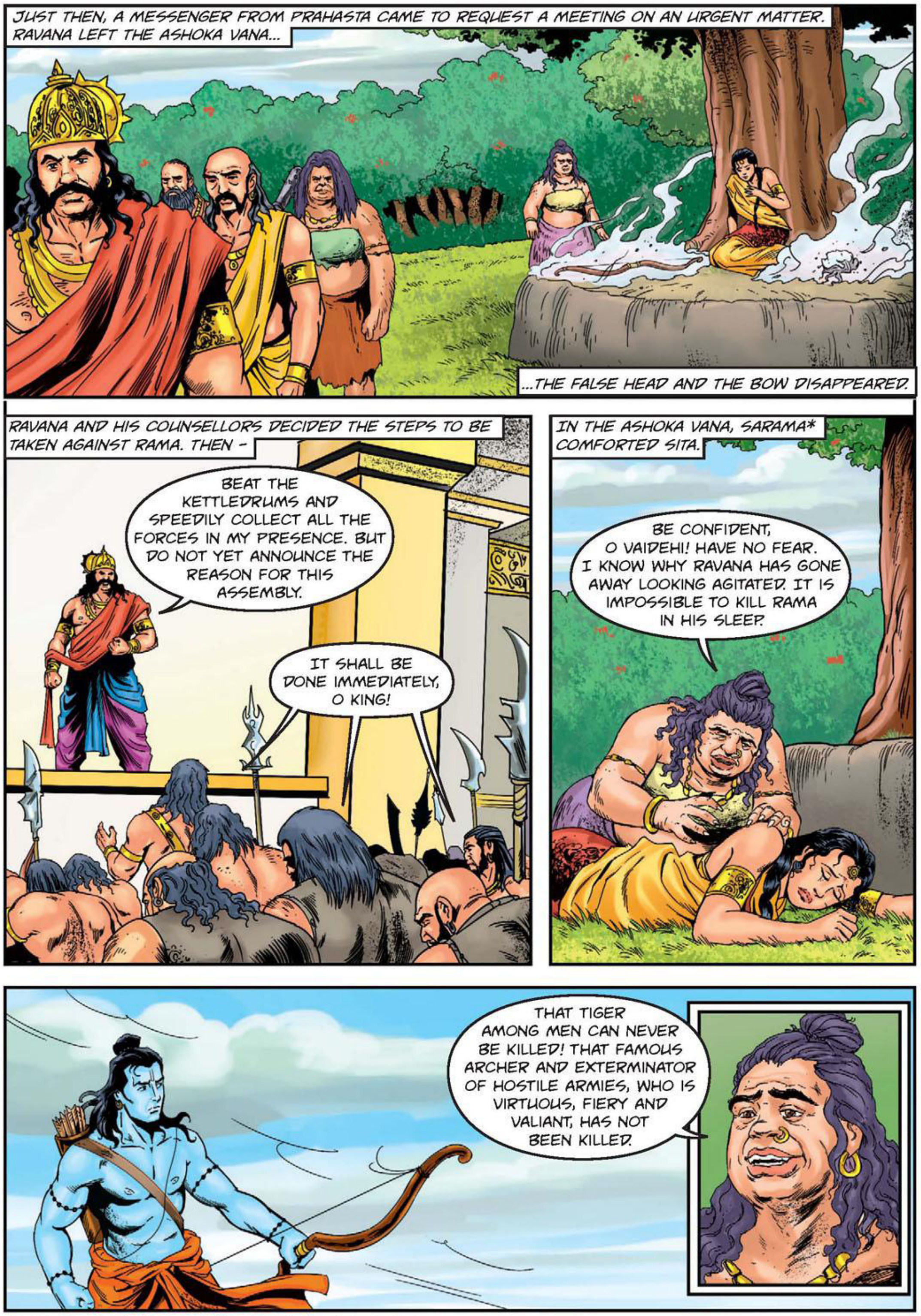

BE SATISFIED NOW, OH KAIKEYI! RAMA, HAS BEEN KILLED, AND THE ENTIRE RACE IS DESTROYED! WHAT HARM DID HE EVER DO YOU?


KAUSALYA HAS LOST HER BELOVED SON. ALAS! A GREAT TRAGEDY HAS TAKEN PLACE! INTENT ON RESCUING ME FROM GREAT DANGER AND SORROW, YOU HAVE BEEN KILLED. THOUGH ASTROLOGERS PREDICTED A LONG LIFE FOR YOU...

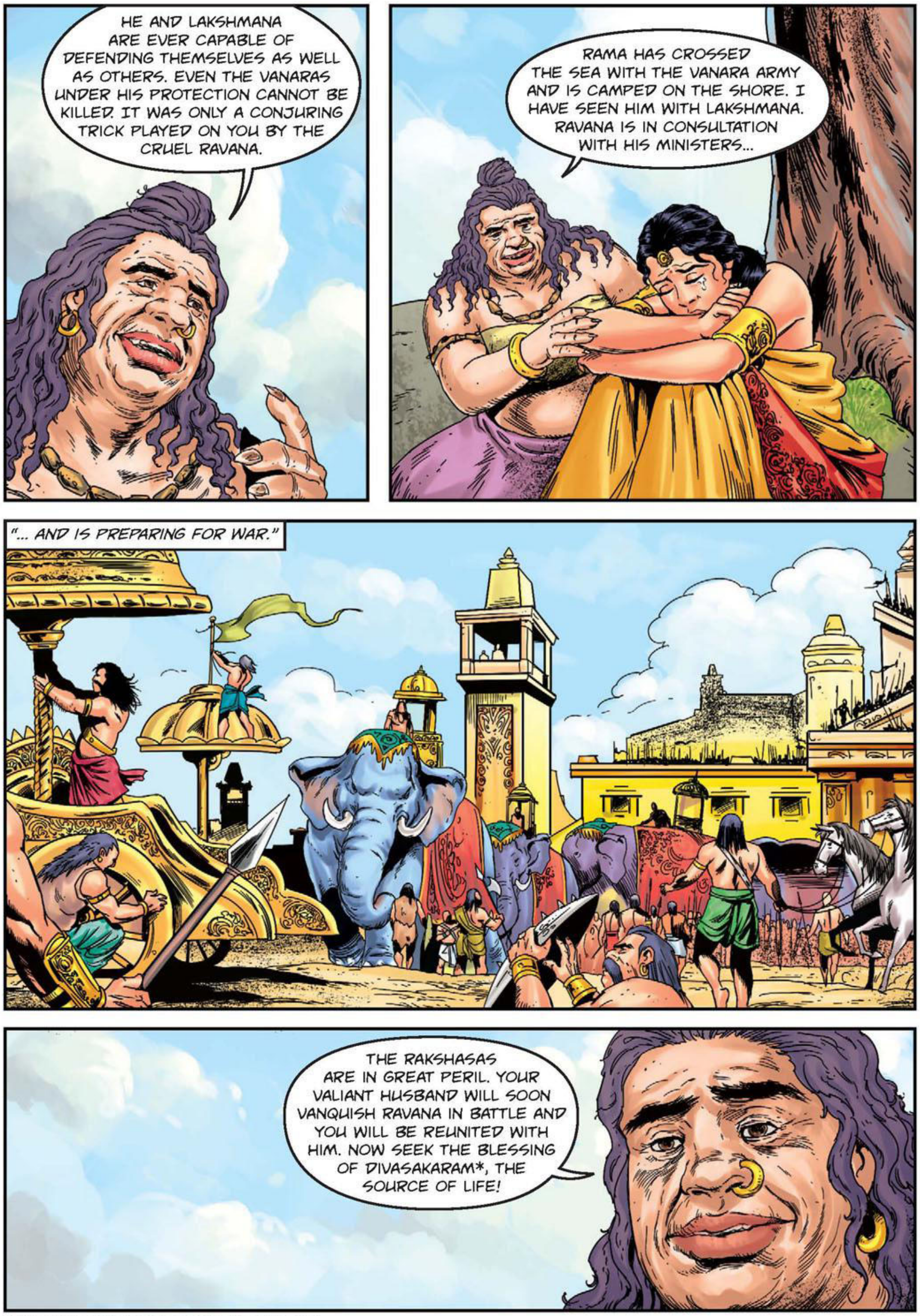

...YOU HAVE DIED YOUNG, LEAVING ME A WIDOW. HOW DID YOU MEET WITH AN UNFORESEEN DEATH, O WISE ONE? INDEED, KAALA* IS ALL-POWERFUL! YOU MUST SURELY BE IN HEAVEN WITH YOUR FATHER AND YOUR ANCESTORS!

*TIME, OR DESTINY

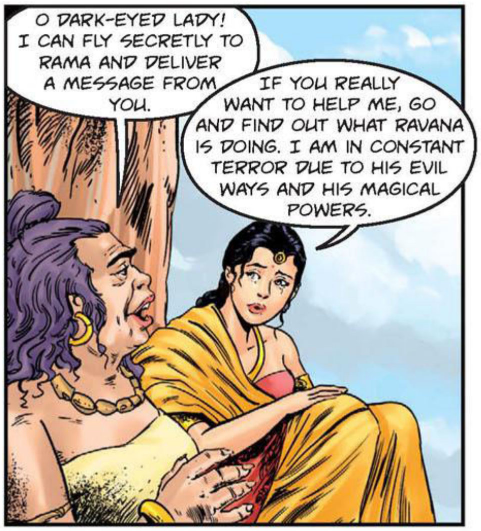

HAVING DESERTED ME, YOU LIE THERE EMBRACING THE EARTH, O JEWEL AMONG MEN! HERE LIES YOUR BOW, WHICH I USED TO WORSHIP LOVINGLY WITH SANDAL PASTE AND FLOWERS. WHY DON'T YOU LOOK AT ME, O PRINCE?
WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME? REMEMBER THE SOLEMN PROMISE YOU MADE WHEN WE WERE MARRIED - TO PRACTISE VIRTUE WITH ME. TAKE ME WITH YOU! DO NOT DESERT ME NOW, IN MY MISERY!
OF THE THREE WHO WENT INTO EXILE, ONLY LAKSHMANA WILL RETURN TO AYODHYA. KAUSALYA WILL NOT SURVIVE THE NEWS OF YOUR DEATH. O VALIANT RAGHAVA! YOU CROSSED THE SEA FOR MY SAKE... I AM THE UNWORTHY CAUSE OF YOUR DEATH!
SURELY I MUST HAVE COMMITTED SOME GREAT SIN IN A PREVIOUS BIRTH! KILL ME AT ONCE, OH RAVANA! PERFORM A SUPREMELY VIRTUOUS DEED BY UNITING A HUSBAND WITH HIS WIFE! I SHALL FOLLOW THE WAY OF MY HIGH-SOULED HUSBAND.

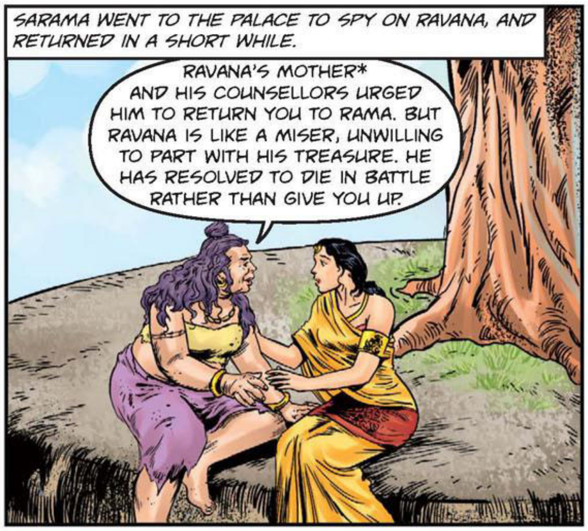

JUST THEN, A MESSENGER FROM PRAHASTA CAME TO REQUEST A MEETING ON AN URGENT MATTER. RAVANA LEFT THE ASHOKA VANA...
...THE FALSE HEAD AND THE BOW DISAPPEARED.
RAVANA AND HIS COUNSELLORS DECIDED THE STEPS TO BE TAKEN AGAINST RAMA. THEN -
BEAT THE KETTLEDRUMS AND SPEEDILY COLLECT ALL THE FORCES IN MY PRESENCE. BUT DO NOT YET ANNOUNCE THE REASON FOR THIS ASSEMBLY.
IT SHALL BE DONE IMMEDIATELY, O KING!
IN THE ASHOKA VANA, SARAMA* COMFORTED SITA.
BE CONFIDENT, O VAIDEHI! HAVE NO FEAR. I KNOW WHY RAVANA HAS GONE AWAY LOOKING AGITATED. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO KILL RAMA IN HIS SLEEP.
THAT TIGER AMONG MEN CAN NEVER BE KILLED! THAT FAMOUS ARCHER AND EXTERMINATOR OF HOSTILE ARMIES, WHO IS VIRTUOUS, FIERY AND VALIANT, HAS NOT BEEN KILLED.

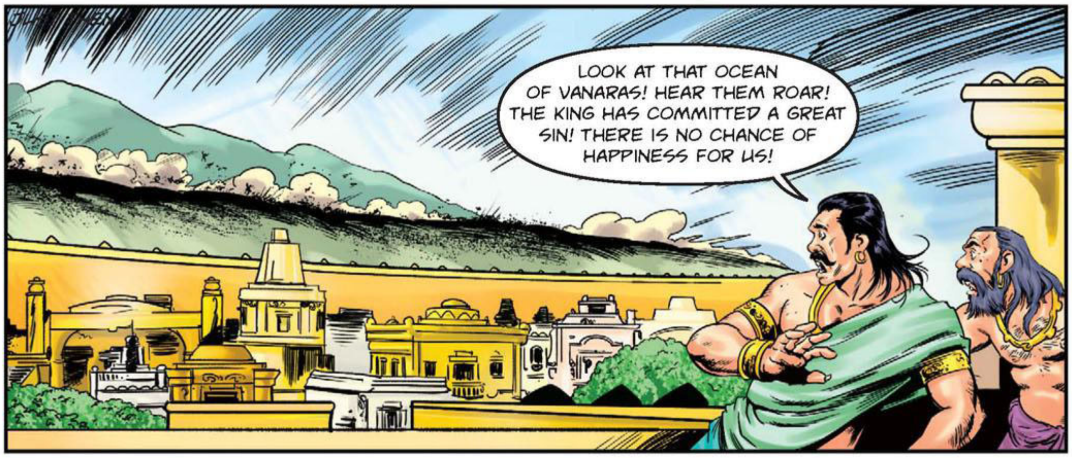
*A RAKSHASI WHO HAD BEEN ORDERED BY RAVANA TO GUARD SITA, AND HAD BECOME HER FRIEND

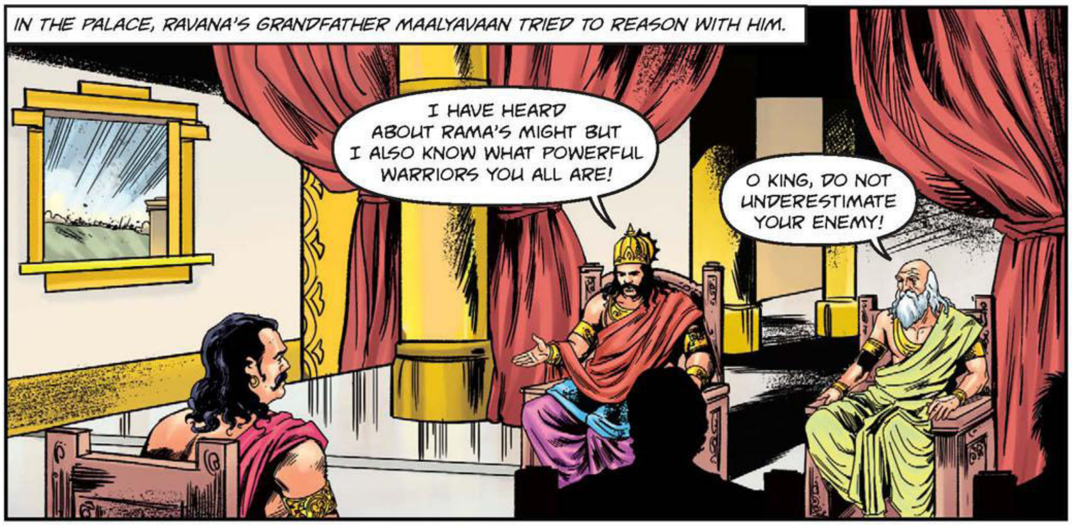

HE AND LAKSHMANA ARE EVER CAPABLE OF DEFENDING THEMSELVES AS WELL AS OTHERS. EVEN THE VANARAS UNDER HIS PROTECTION CANNOT BE KILLED. IT WAS ONLY A CONJURING TRICK PLAYED ON YOU BY THE CRUEL RAVANA.
RAMA HAS CROSSED THE SEA WITH THE VANARA ARMY AND IS CAMPED ON THE SHORE. I HAVE SEEN HIM WITH LAKSHMANA. RAVANA IS IN CONSULTATION WITH HIS MINISTERS...
"... AND IS PREPARING FOR WAR."
THE RAKSHASAS ARE IN GREAT PERIL. YOUR VALIANT HUSBAND WILL SOON VANQUISH RAVANA IN BATTLE AND YOU WILL BE REUNITED WITH HIM. NOW SEEK THE BLESSING OF DIVASAKARAM*, THE SOURCE OF LIFE!

*ANOTHER NAME FOR SURYA, THE SUN

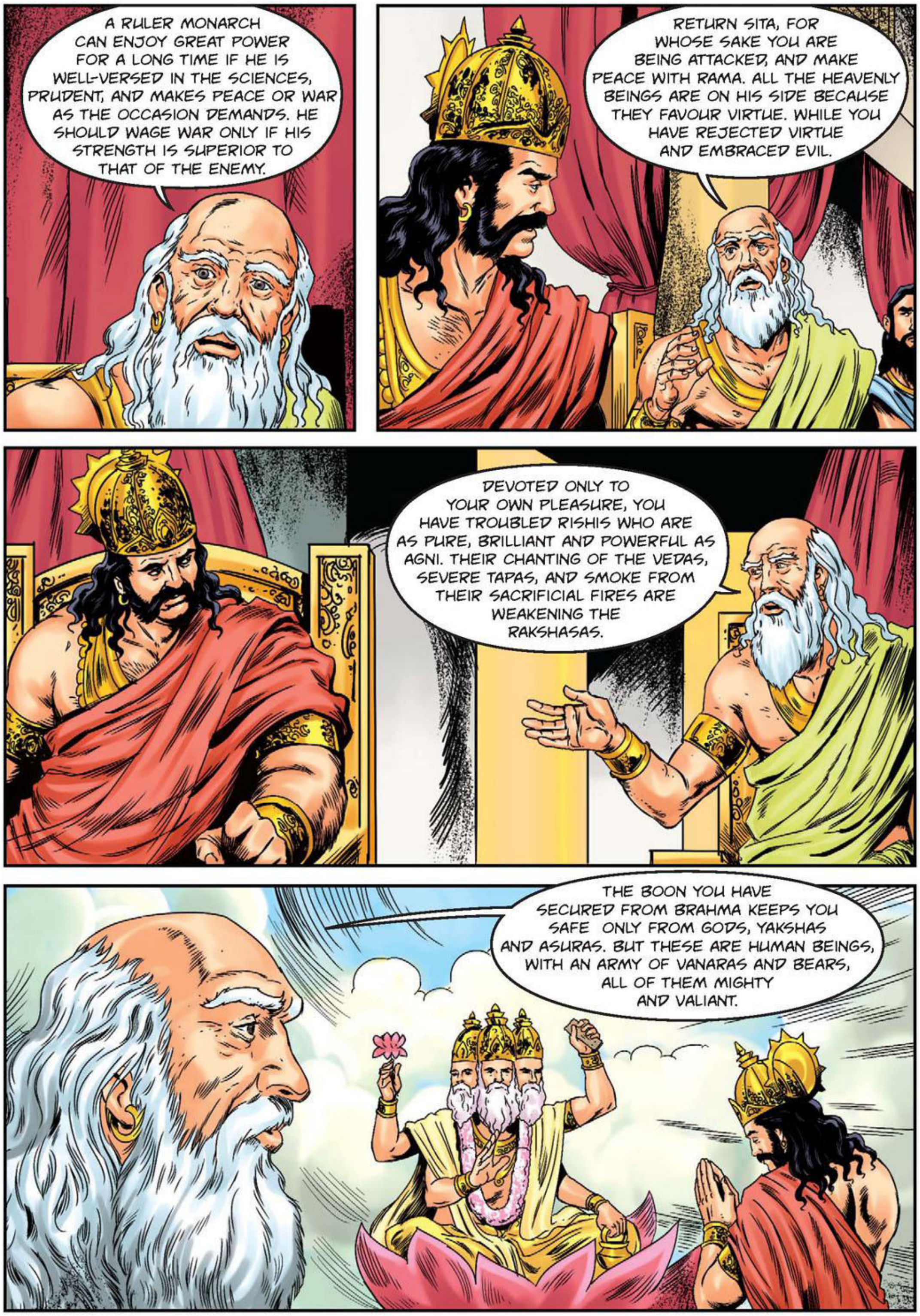

O DARK-EYED LADY! I CAN FLY SECRETLY TO RAMA AND DELIVER A MESSAGE FROM YOU.
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO HELP ME, GO AND FIND OUT WHAT RAVANA IS DOING. I AM IN CONSTANT TERROR DUE TO HIS EVIL WAYS AND HIS MAGICAL POWERS.

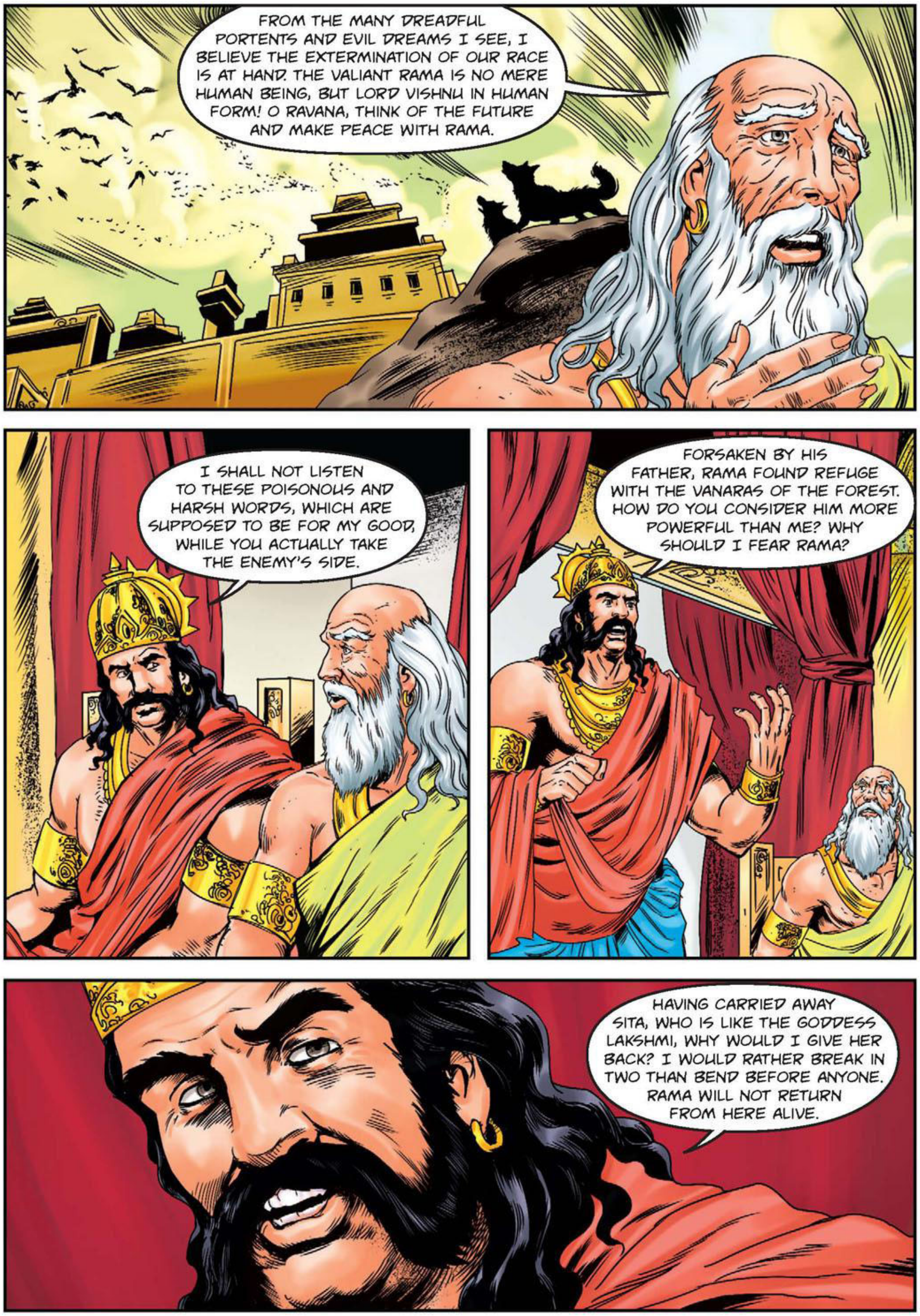

SARAMA WENT TO THE PALACE TO SPY ON RAVANA, AND RETURNED IN A SHORT WHILE.
RAVANA'S MOTHER* AND HIS COUNSELLORS URGED HIM TO RETURN YOU TO RAMA. BUT RAVANA IS LIKE A MISER, UNWILLING TO PART WITH HIS TREASURE. HE HAS RESOLVED TO DIE IN BATTLE RATHER THAN GIVE YOU UP.

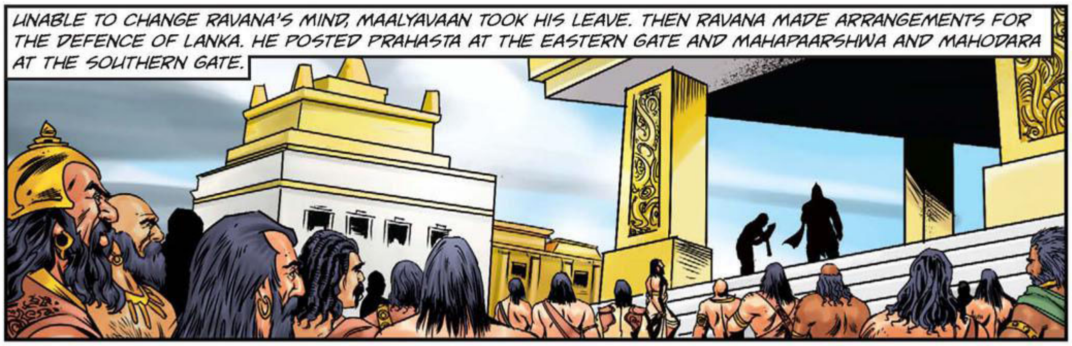

LOOK AT THAT OCEAN OF VANARAS! HEAR THEM ROAR! THE KING HAS COMMITTED A GREAT SIN! THERE IS NO CHANCE OF HAPPINESS FOR US!


IN THE PALACE, RAVANA'S GRANDFATHER MAALYAVAAN TRIED TO REASON WITH HIM.
I HAVE HEARD ABOUT RAMA'S MIGHT BUT I ALSO KNOW WHAT POWERFUL WARRIORS YOU ALL ARE!
O KING, DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ENEMY!

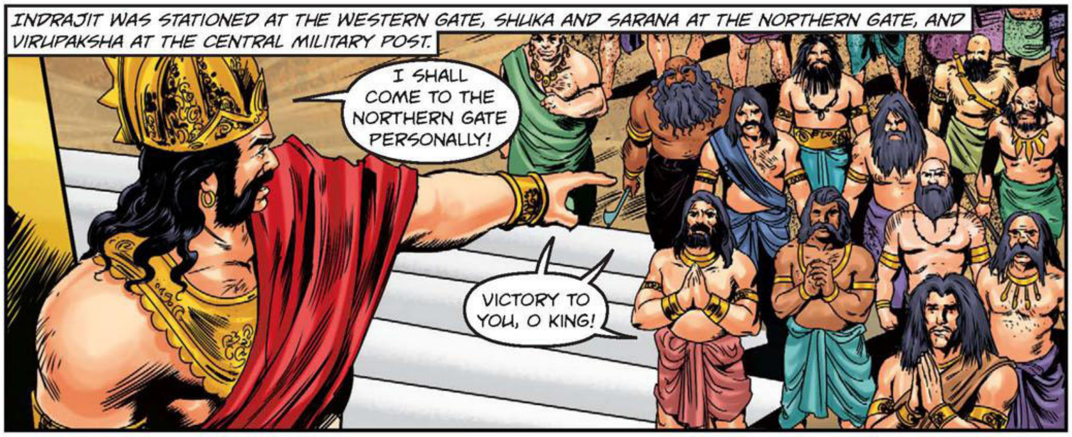
*KAIKASI


A RULER MONARCH CAN ENJOY GREAT POWER FOR A LONG TIME IF HE IS WELL-VERSED IN THE SCIENCES, PRUDENT, AND MAKES PEACE OR WAR AS THE OCCASION DEMANDS. HE SHOULD WAGE WAR ONLY IF HIS STRENGTH IS SUPERIOR TO THAT OF THE ENEMY.
RETURN SITA, FOR WHOSE SAKE YOU ARE BEING ATTACKED, AND MAKE PEACE WITH RAMA. ALL THE HEAVENLY BEINGS ARE ON HIS SIDE BECAUSE THEY FAVOUR VIRTUE. WHILE YOU HAVE REJECTED VIRTUE AND EMBRACED EVIL.
DEVOTED ONLY TO YOUR OWN PLEASURE, YOU HAVE TROUBLED RISHIS WHO ARE AS PURE, BRILLIANT AND POWERFUL AS AGNI. THEIR CHANTING OF THE VEDAS, SEVERE TAPAS, AND SMOKE FROM THEIR SACRIFICIAL FIRES ARE WEAKENING THE RAKSHASAS.
THE BOON YOU HAVE SECURED FROM BRAHMA KEEPS YOU SAFE ONLY FROM GODS, YAKSHAS AND ASURAS. BUT THESE ARE HUMAN BEINGS, WITH AN ARMY OF VANARAS AND BEARS, ALL OF THEM MIGHTY AND VALIANT.


FROM THE MANY DREADFUL PORTENTS AND EVIL DREAMS I SEE, I BELIEVE THE EXTERMINATION OF OUR RACE IS AT HAND. THE VALIANT RAMA IS NO MERE HUMAN BEING, BUT LORD VISHNU IN HUMAN FORM! O RAVANA, THINK OF THE FUTURE AND MAKE PEACE WITH RAMA.
I SHALL NOT LISTEN TO THESE POISONOUS AND HARSH WORDS, WHICH ARE SUPPOSED TO BE FOR MY GOOD, WHILE YOU ACTUALLY TAKE THE ENEMY'S SIDE.
FORSAKEN BY HIS FATHER, RAMA FOUND REFUGE WITH THE VANARAS OF THE FOREST. HOW DO YOU CONSIDER HIM MORE POWERFUL THAN ME? WHY SHOULD I FEAR RAMA?
HAVING CARRIED AWAY SITA, WHO IS LIKE THE GODDESS LAKSHMI, WHY WOULD I GIVE HER BACK? I WOULD RATHER BREAK IN TWO THAN BEND BEFORE ANYONE. RAMA WILL NOT RETURN FROM HERE ALIVE.

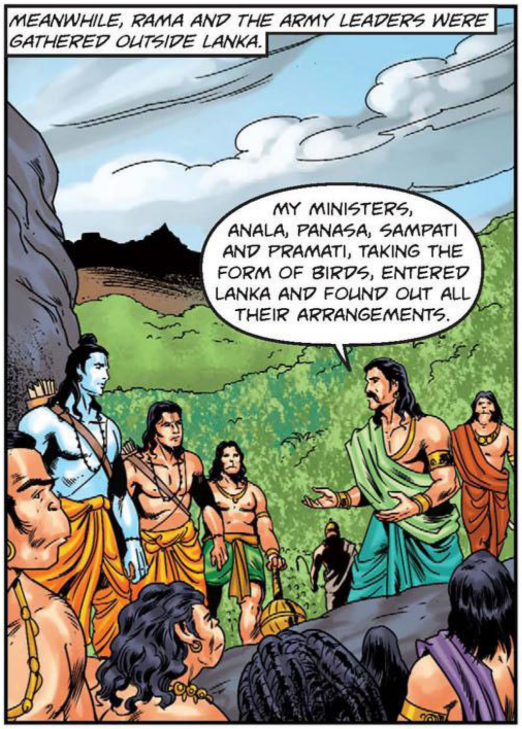


UNABLE TO CHANGE RAVANA'S MIND, MAALYAVAAN TOOK HIS LEAVE. THEN RAVANA MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DEFENCE OF LANKA. HE POSTED PRAHASTA AT THE EASTERN GATE AND MAHAPAARSHWA AND MAHODARA AT THE SOUTHERN GATE.



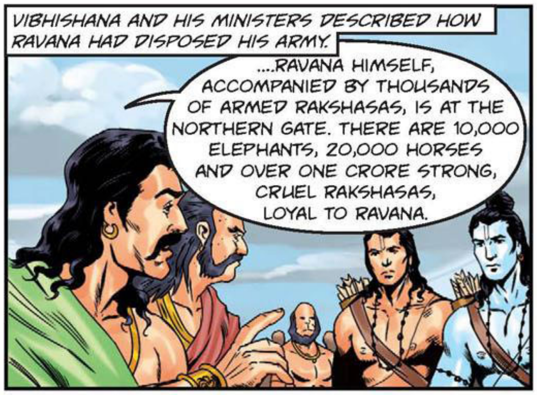
INDRAJIT WAS STATIONED AT THE WESTERN GATE, SHUKA AND SARANA AT THE NORTHERN GATE, AND VIRUPAKSHA AT THE CENTRAL MILITARY POST.

I SHALL COME TO THE NORTHERN GATE PERSONALLY!
VICTORY TO YOU, O KING!



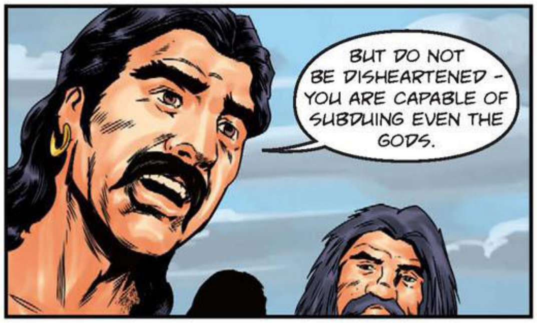
MEANWHILE, RAMA AND THE ARMY LEADERS WERE GATHERED OUTSIDE LANKA.

MY MINISTERS, ANALA, PANASA, SAMPATI AND PRAMATI, TAKING THE FORM OF BIRDS, ENTERED LANKA AND FOUND OUT ALL THEIR ARRANGEMENTS.

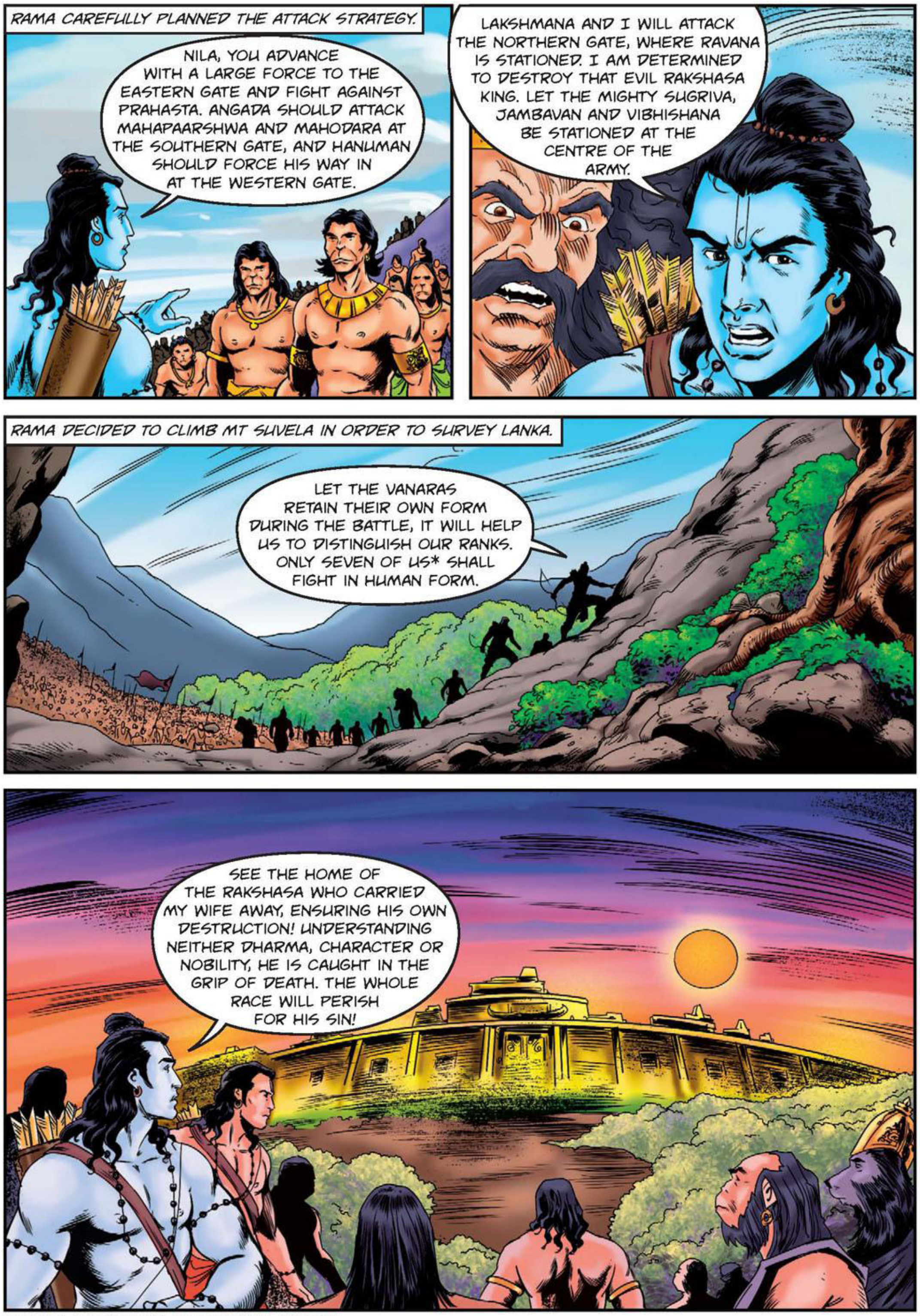


VIBHISHANA AND HIS MINISTERS DESCRIBED HOW RAVANA HAD DISPOSED HIS ARMY.

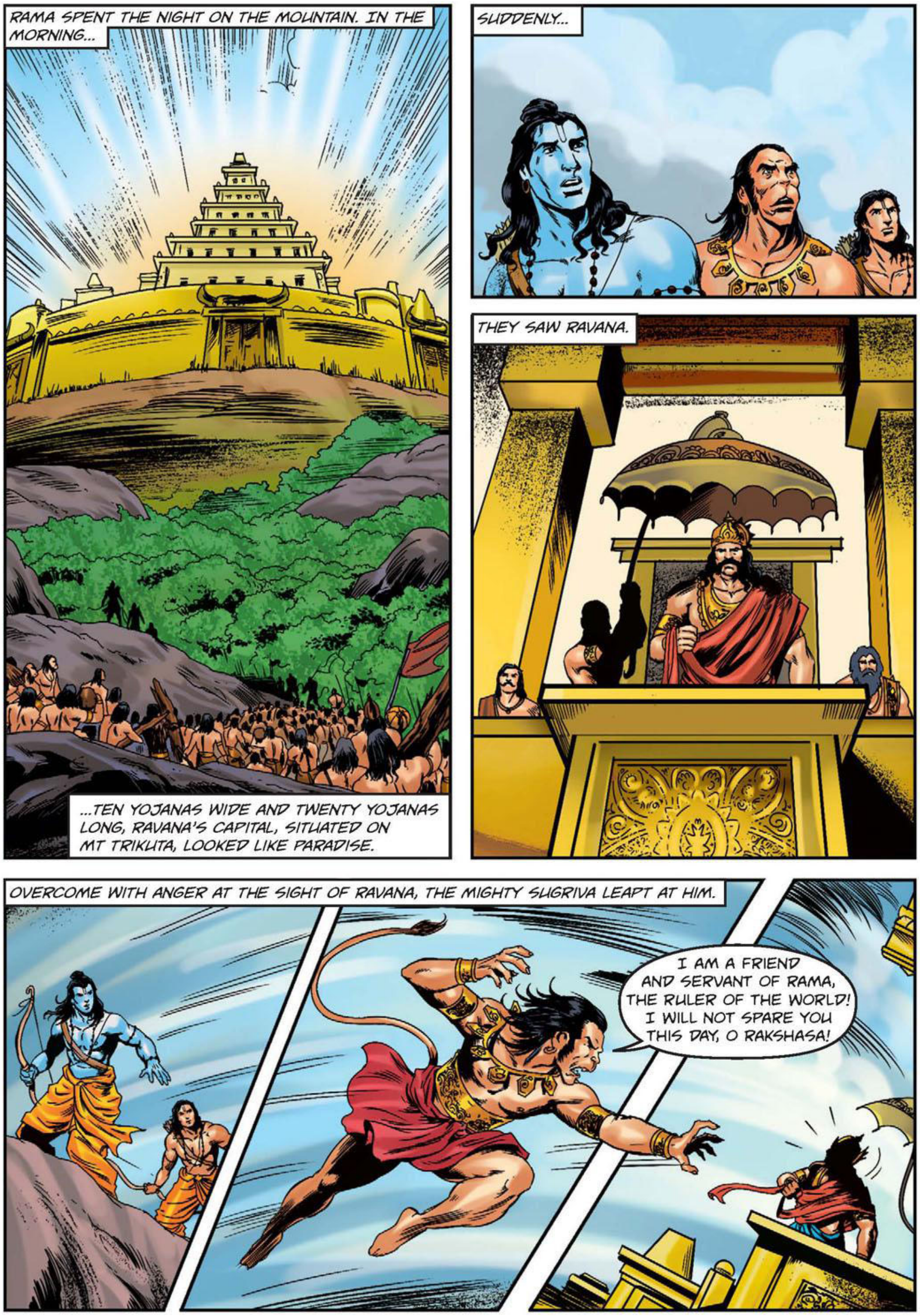
...RAVANA HIMSELF, ACCOMPANIED BY THOUSANDS OF ARMED RAKSHASAS, IS AT THE NORTHERN GATE. THERE ARE 10,000 ELEPHANTS, 20,000 HORSES AND OVER ONE CRORE STRONG, CRUEL RAKSHASAS, LOYAL TO RAVANA.

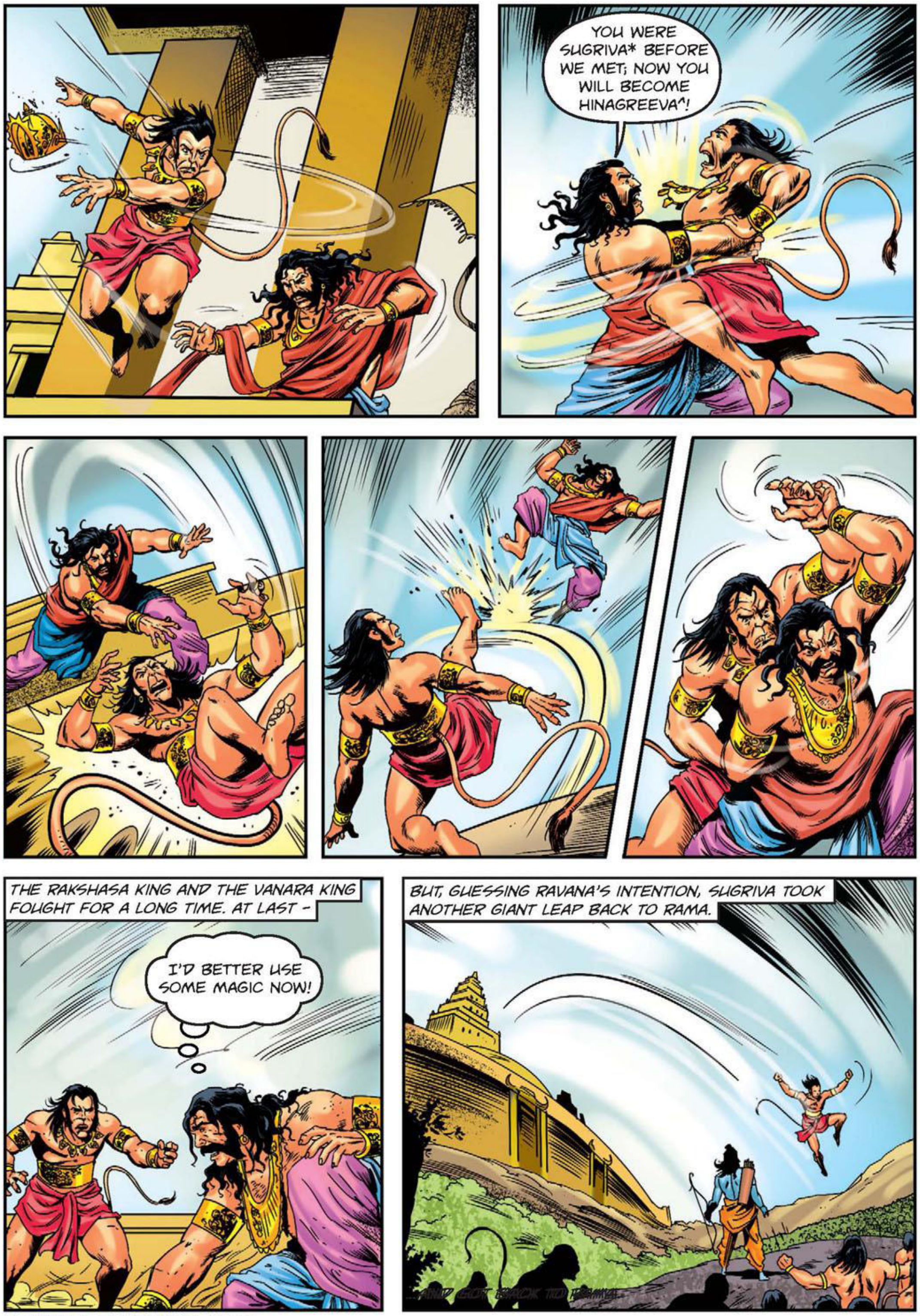


BUT DO NOT BE DISHEARTENED - YOU ARE CAPABLE OF SUBDUING EVEN THE GODS.


RAMA CAREFULLY PLANNED THE ATTACK STRATEGY.
NILA, YOU ADVANCE WITH A LARGE FORCE TO THE EASTERN GATE AND FIGHT AGAINST PRAHASTA. ANGADA SHOULD ATTACK MAHAPAARSHWA AND MAHODARA AT THE SOUTHERN GATE, AND HANUMAN SHOULD FORCE HIS WAY IN AT THE WESTERN GATE.
LAKSHMANA AND I WILL ATTACK THE NORTHERN GATE, WHERE RAVANA IS STATIONED. I AM DETERMINED TO DESTROY THAT EVIL RAKSHASA KING. LET THE MIGHTY SUGRIVA, JAMBAVAN AND VIBHISHANA BE STATIONED AT THE CENTRE OF THE ARMY.
RAMA DECIDED TO CLIMB MT SUVELA IN ORDER TO SURVEY LANKA.
LET THE VANARAS RETAIN THEIR OWN FORM DURING THE BATTLE, IT WILL HELP US TO DISTINGUISH OUR RANKS. ONLY SEVEN OF US* SHALL FIGHT IN HUMAN FORM.
SEE THE HOME OF THE RAKSHASA WHO CARRIED MY WIFE AWAY, ENSURING HIS OWN DESTRUCTION! UNDERSTANDING NEITHER DHARMA, CHARACTER OR NOBILITY, HE IS CAUGHT IN THE GRIP OF DEATH. THE WHOLE RACE WILL PERISH FOR HIS SIN!

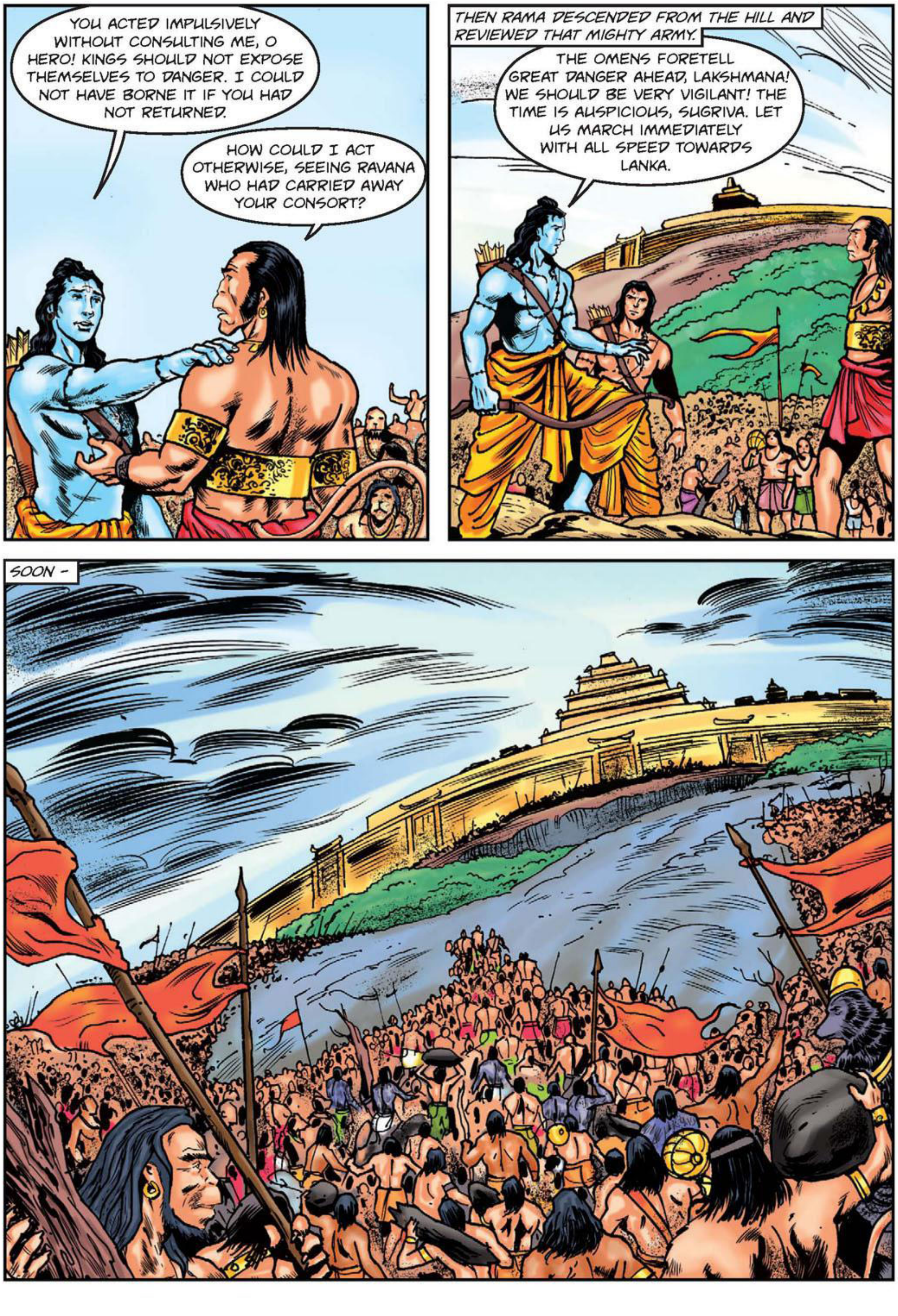
*RAMA, LAKSHMANA, VIBHISHANA AND HIS FOUR MINISTERS

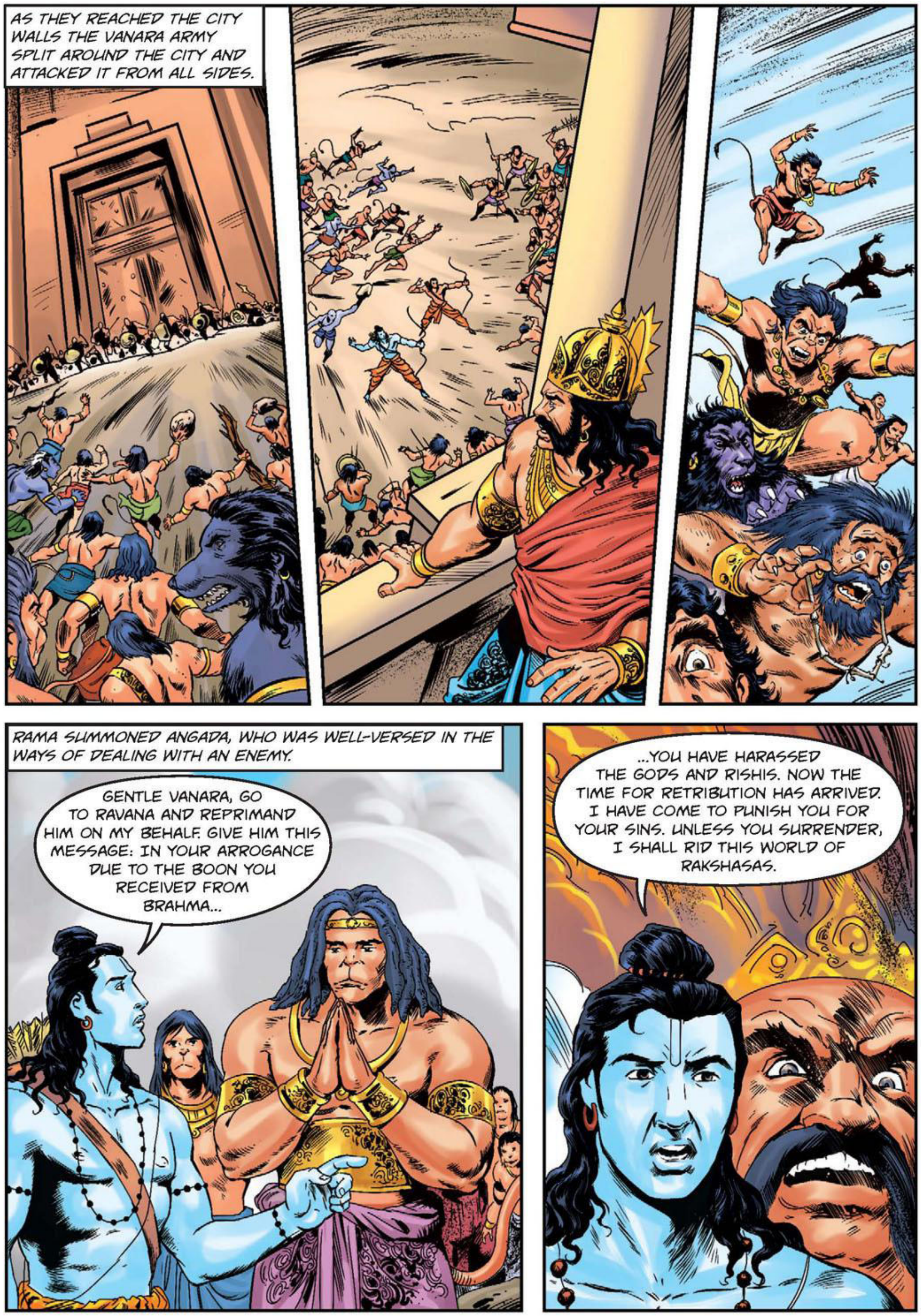

RAMA SPENT THE NIGHT ON THE MOUNTAIN. IN THE MORNING...
...TEN YOJANAS WIDE AND TWENTY YOJANAS LONG, RAVANA'S CAPITAL, SITUATED ON MT TRIKUTA, LOOKED LIKE PARADISE.
SUDDENLY...
THEY SAW RAVANA.
OVERCOME WITH ANGER AT THE SIGHT OF RAVANA, THE MIGHTY SUGRIVA LEAPT AT HIM.
I AM A FRIEND AND SERVANT OF RAMA, THE RULER OF THE WORLD! I WILL NOT SPARE YOU THIS DAY, O RAKSHASA!

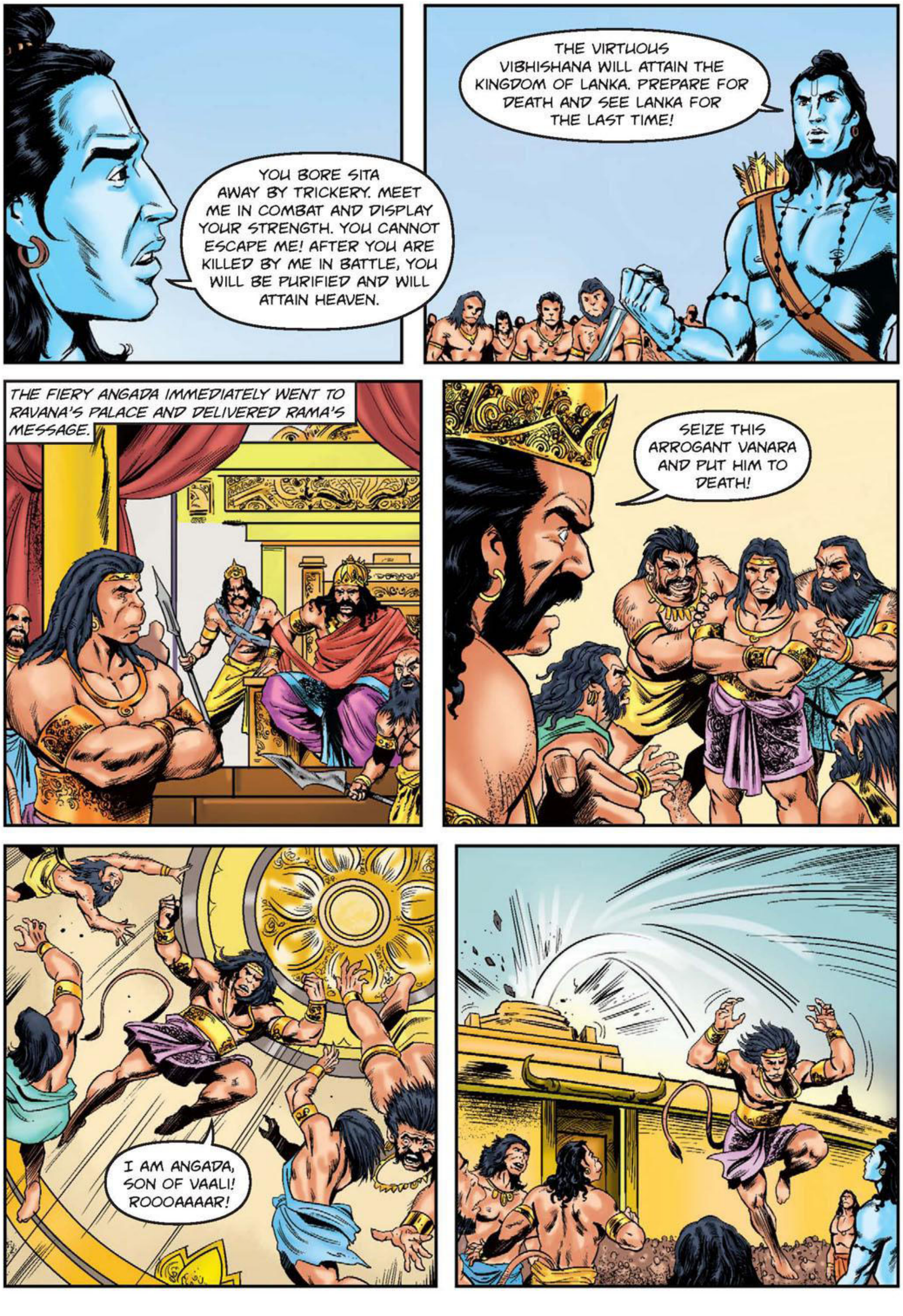

YOU WERE SUGRIVA* BEFORE WE MET; NOW YOU WILL BECOME HINAGREEVA^!
THE RAKSHASA KING AND THE VANARA KING FOUGHT FOR A LONG TIME. AT LAST –
I'D BETTER USE SOME MAGIC NOW!
BUT, GUESSING RAVANA'S INTENTION, SUGRIVA TOOK ANOTHER GIANT LEAP BACK TO RAMA.
...AND GOT BACK TO RAMA.

*ONE WITH A BEAUTIFUL NECK

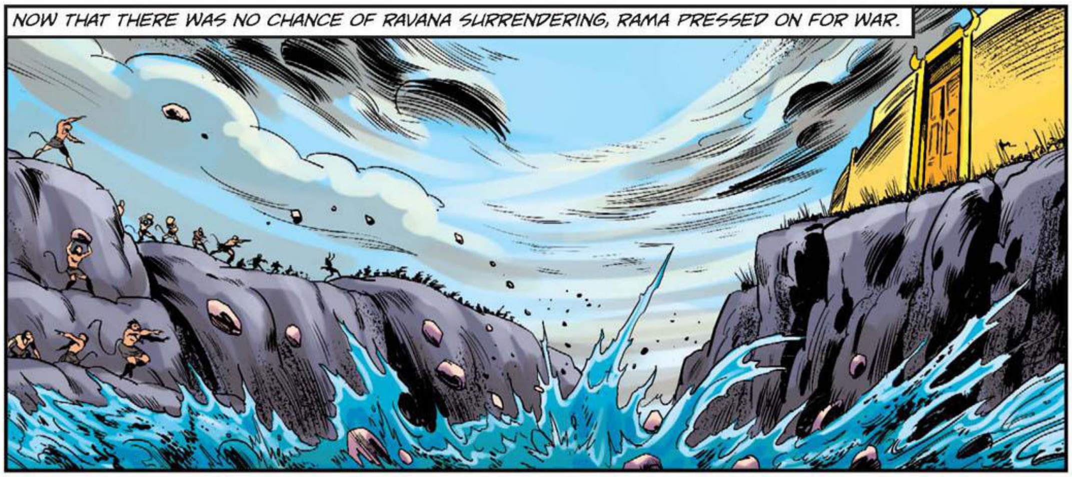
^ONE WITHOUT A NECK


YOU ACTED IMPULSIVELY WITHOUT CONSULTING ME, O HERO! KINGS SHOULD NOT EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO DANGER. I COULD NOT HAVE BORNE IT IF YOU HAD NOT RETURNED.
HOW COULD I ACT OTHERWISE, SEEING RAVANA WHO HAD CARRIED AWAY YOUR CONSORT?
THEN RAMA DESCENDED FROM THE HILL AND REVIEWED THAT MIGHTY ARMY.
THE OMENS FORETELL GREAT DANGER AHEAD, LAKSHMANA! WE SHOULD BE VERY VIGILANT! THE TIME IS AUSPICIOUS, SUGRIVA. LET US MARCH IMMEDIATELY WITH ALL SPEED TOWARDS LANKA.
SOON -

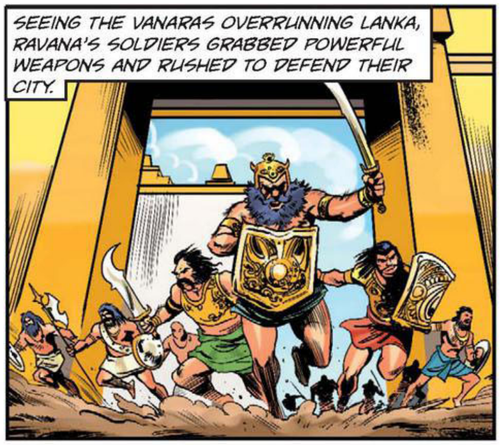

AS THEY REACHED THE CITY WALLS THE VANARA ARMY SPLIT AROUND THE CITY AND ATTACKED IT FROM ALL SIDES.
RAMA SUMMONED ANGADA, WHO WAS WELL-VERSED IN THE WAYS OF DEALING WITH AN ENEMY.
GENTLE VANARA, GO TO RAVANA AND REPRIMAND HIM ON MY BEHALF. GIVE HIM THIS MESSAGE: IN YOUR ARROGANCE DUE TO THE BOON YOU RECEIVED FROM BRAHMA...
...YOU HAVE HARASSED THE GODS AND RISHIS. NOW THE TIME FOR RETRIBUTION HAS ARRIVED. I HAVE COME TO PUNISH YOU FOR YOUR SINS. UNLESS YOU SURRENDER, I SHALL RID THIS WORLD OF RAKSHASAS.

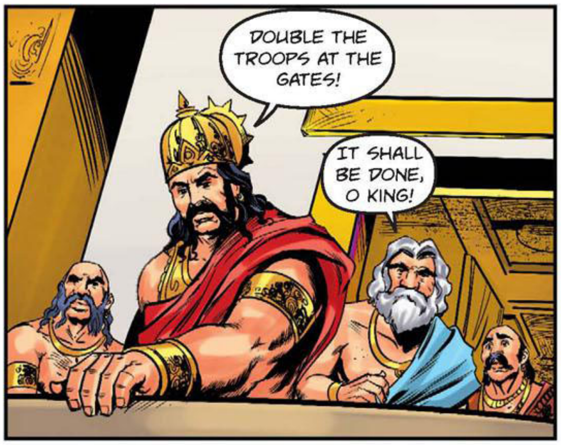

YOU BORE SITA AWAY BY TRICKERY. MEET ME IN COMBAT AND DISPLAY YOUR STRENGTH. YOU CANNOT ESCAPE ME! AFTER YOU ARE KILLED BY ME IN BATTLE, YOU WILL BE PURIFIED AND WILL ATTAIN HEAVEN.
THE VIRTUOUS VIBHISHANA WILL ATTAIN THE KINGDOM OF LANKA. PREPARE FOR DEATH AND SEE LANKA FOR THE LAST TIME!
THE FIERY ANGADA IMMEDIATELY WENT TO RAVANA'S PALACE AND DELIVERED RAMA'S MESSAGE.
SEIZE THIS ARROGANT VANARA AND PUT HIM TO DEATH!
I AM ANGADA, SON OF VAALI! ROOOAAAAR!

NOW THAT THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF RAVANA SURRENDERING, RAMA PRESSED ON FOR WAR.

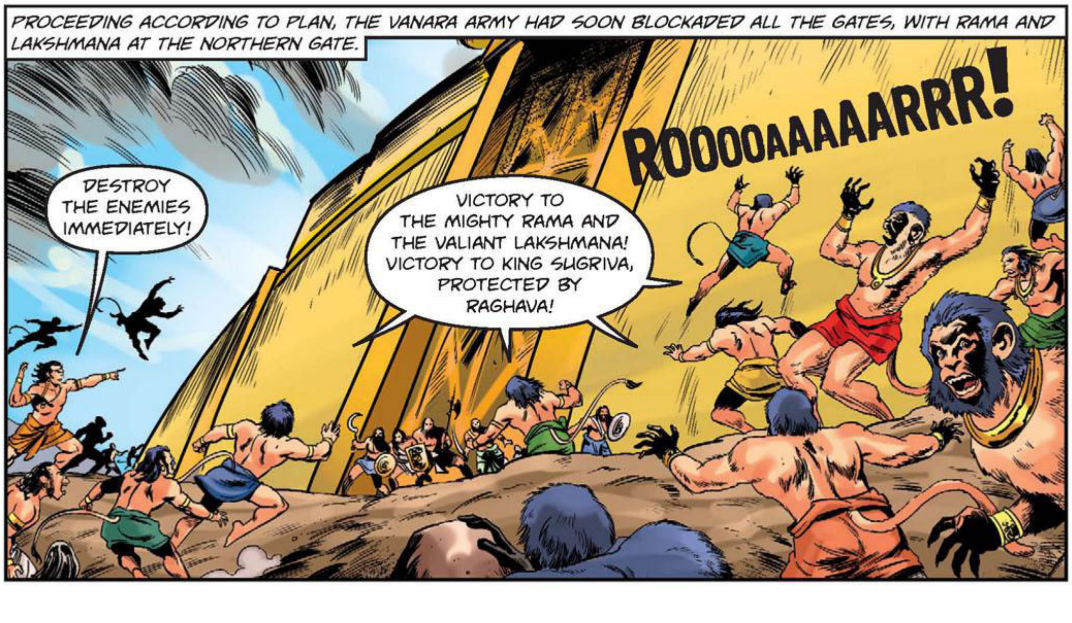


SEEING THE VANARAS OVERRUNNING LANKA, RAVANA'S SOLDIERS GRABBED POWERFUL WEAPONS AND RUSHED TO DEFEND THEIR CITY.

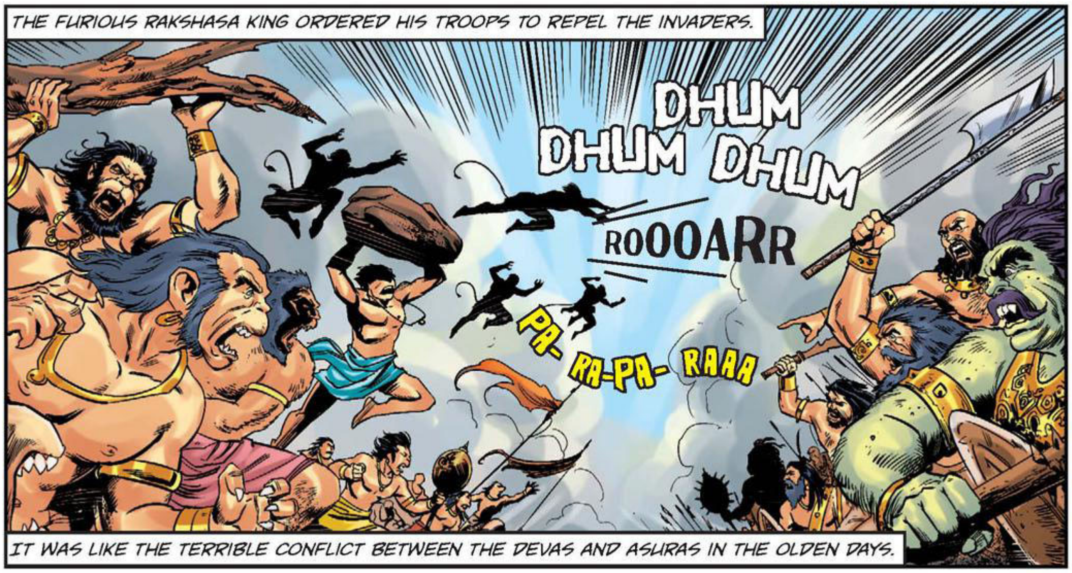



DOUBLE THE TROOPS AT THE GATES!
IT SHALL BE DONE, O KING!

PROCEEDING ACCORDING TO PLAN, THE VANARA ARMY HAD SOON BLOCKADED ALL THE GATES, WITH RAMA AND LAKSHMANA AT THE NORTHERN GATE.


ROOOOAAAAARRR!
DESTROY THE ENEMIES IMMEDIATELY!
VICTORY TO THE MIGHTY RAMA AND THE VALIANT LAKSHMANA! VICTORY TO KING SUGRIVA, PROTECTED BY RAGHAVA!

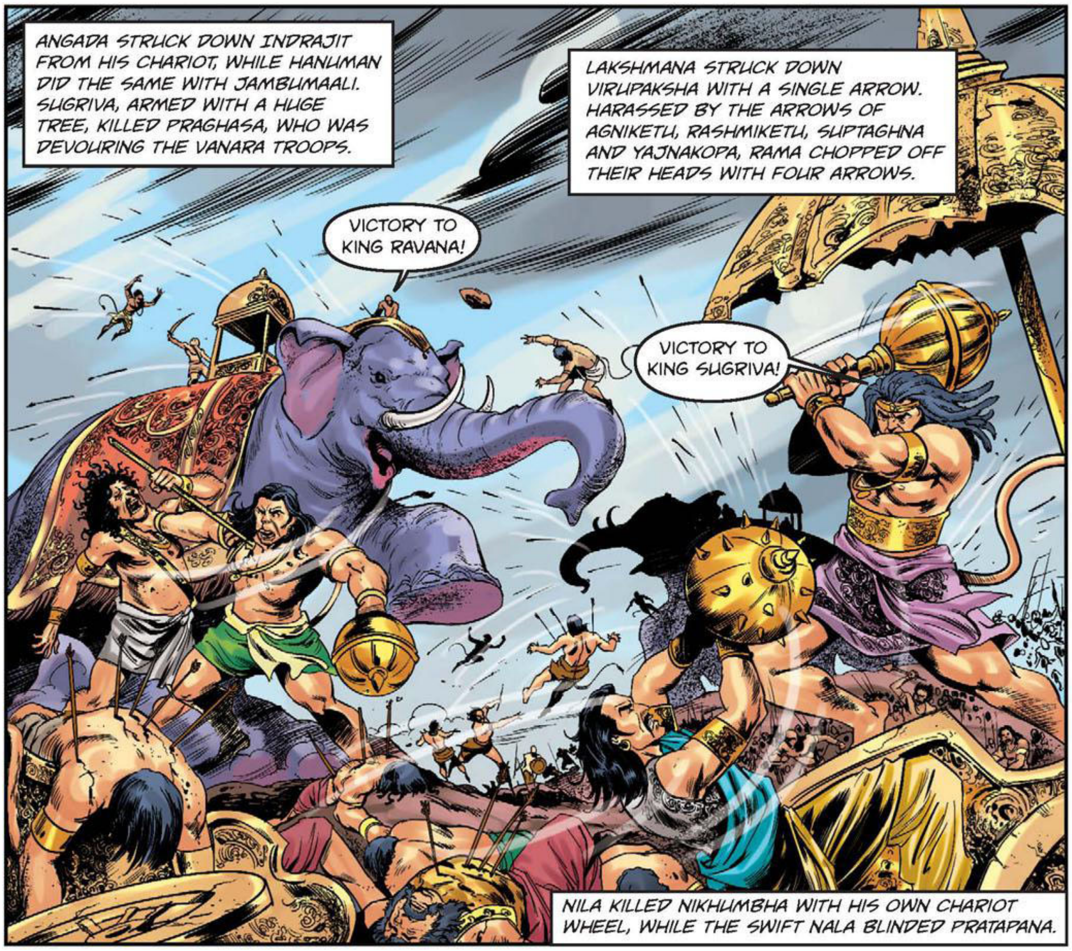
THE FURIOUS RAKSHASA KING ORDERED HIS TROOPS TO REPEL THE INVADERS.


DHUM
DHUM DHUM
ROOOARR
PA-RA-PA-RAAA

IT WAS LIKE THE TERRIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE DEVAS AND ASURAS IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

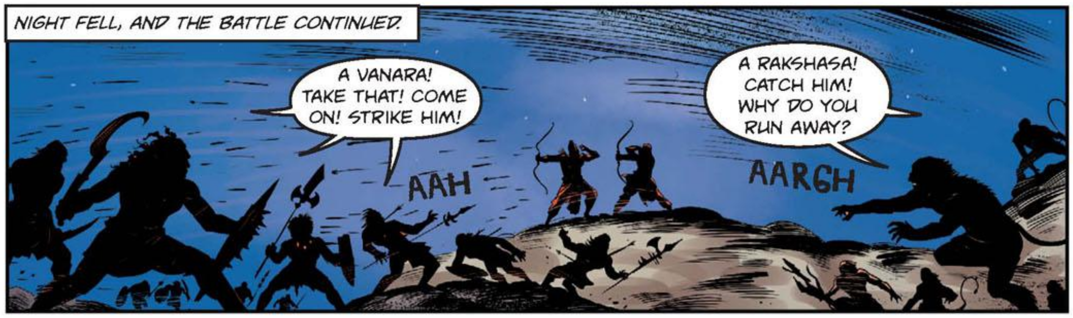
ANGADA STRUCK DOWN INDRAJIT FROM HIS CHARIOT, WHILE HANUMAN DID THE SAME WITH JAMBUMAALI. SUGRIVA, ARMED WITH A HUGE TREE, KILLED PRAGHASA, WHO WAS DEVOURING THE VANARA TROOPS.

LAKSHMANA STRUCK DOWN VIRUPAKSHA WITH A SINGLE ARROW. HARASSED BY THE ARROWS OF AGNIKETU, RASHMIKETU, SUPTAGHNA AND YAJNAKOPA, RAMA CHOPPED OFF THEIR HEADS WITH FOUR ARROWS.

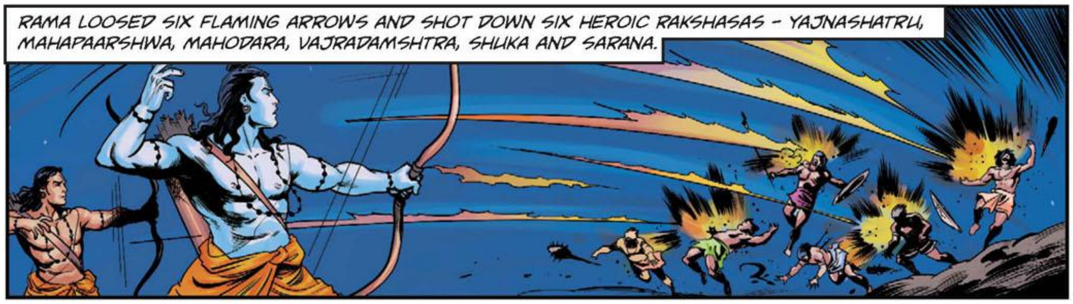

VICTORY TO KING RAVANA!
VICTORY TO KING SUGRIVA!

NILA KILLED NIKHUMBHA WITH HIS OWN CHARIOT WHEEL, WHILE THE SWIFT NALA BLINDED PRATAPANA.

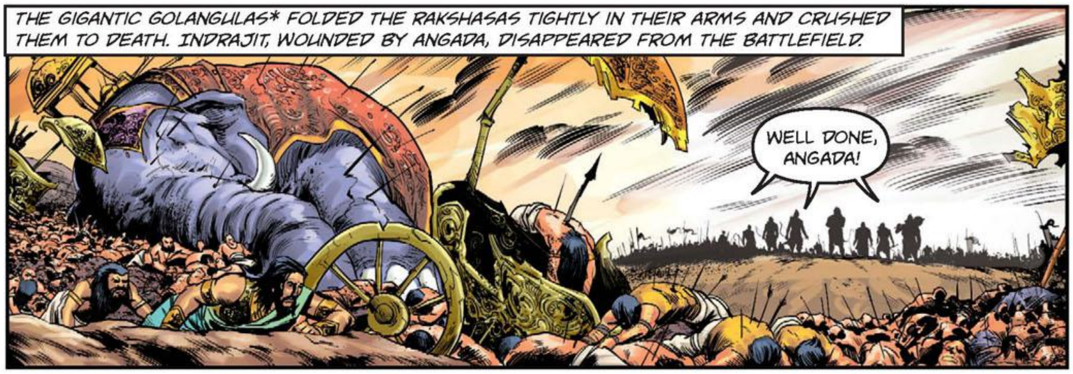
NIGHT FELL, AND THE BATTLE CONTINUED.


A VANARA! TAKE THAT! COME ON! STRIKE HIM!
AAH
A RAKSHASA! CATCH HIM! WHY DO YOU RUN AWAY?
AARGH

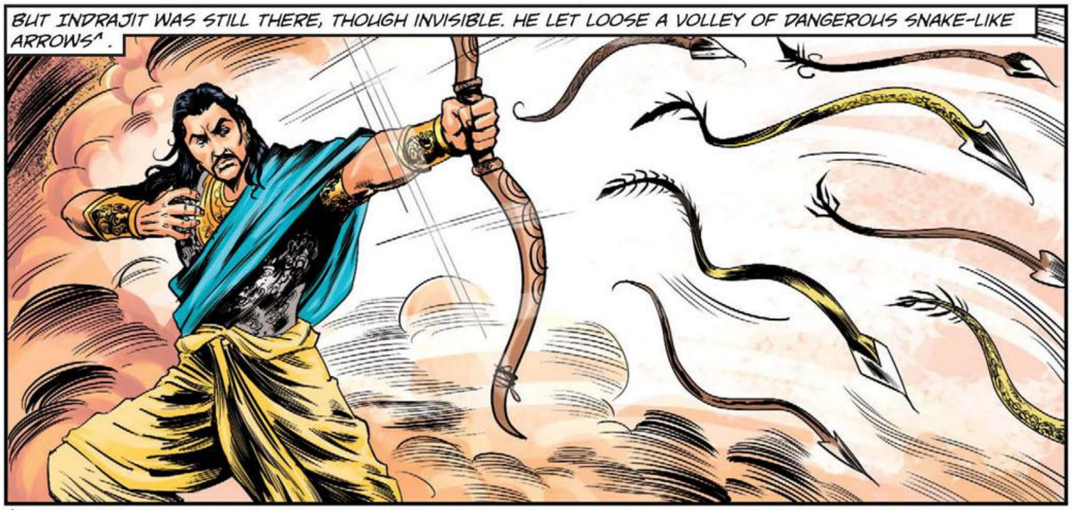
RAMA LOOSED SIX FLAMING ARROWS AND SHOT DOWN SIX HEROIC RAKSHASAS - YAJNASHATRU, MAHAPAARSHWA, MAHODARA, VAJRADAMSHTRA, SHUKA AND SARANA.



THE GIGANTIC GOLANGULAS* FOLDED THE RAKSHASAS TIGHTLY IN THEIR ARMS AND CRUSHED THEM TO DEATH. INDRAJIT, WOUNDED BY ANGADA, DISAPPEARED FROM THE BATTLEFIELD.


WELL DONE, ANGADA!

BUT INDRAJIT WAS STILL THERE, THOUGH INVISIBLE. HE LET LOOSE A VOLLEY OF DANGEROUS SNAKE-LIKE ARROWS^.



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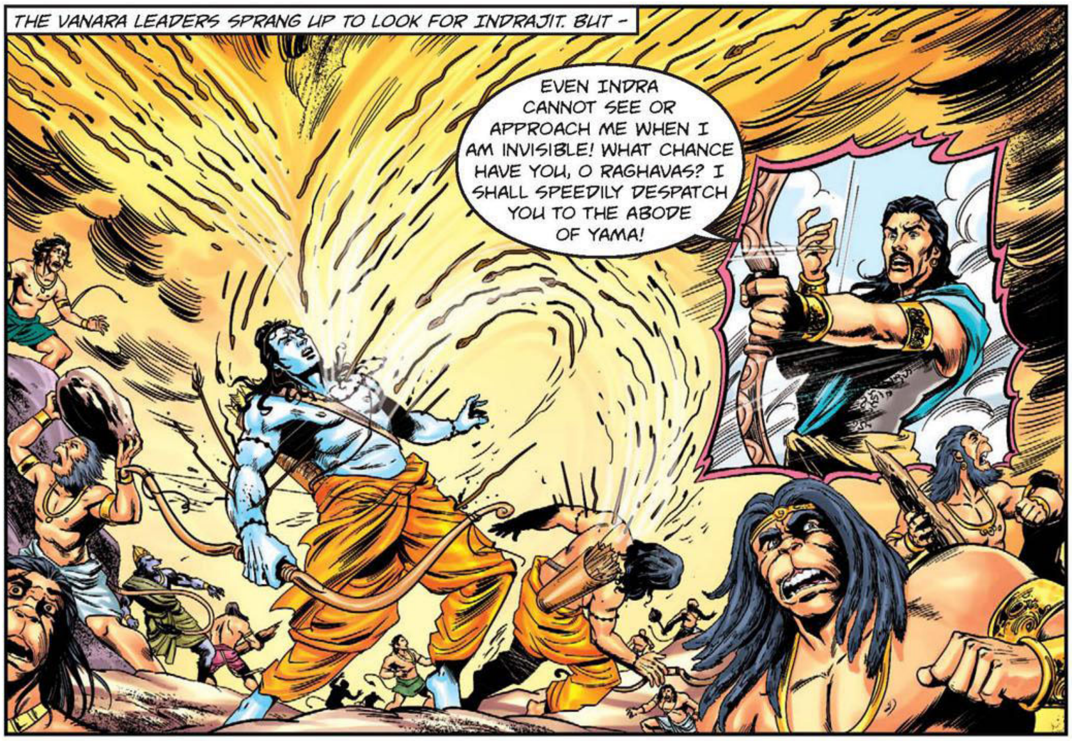
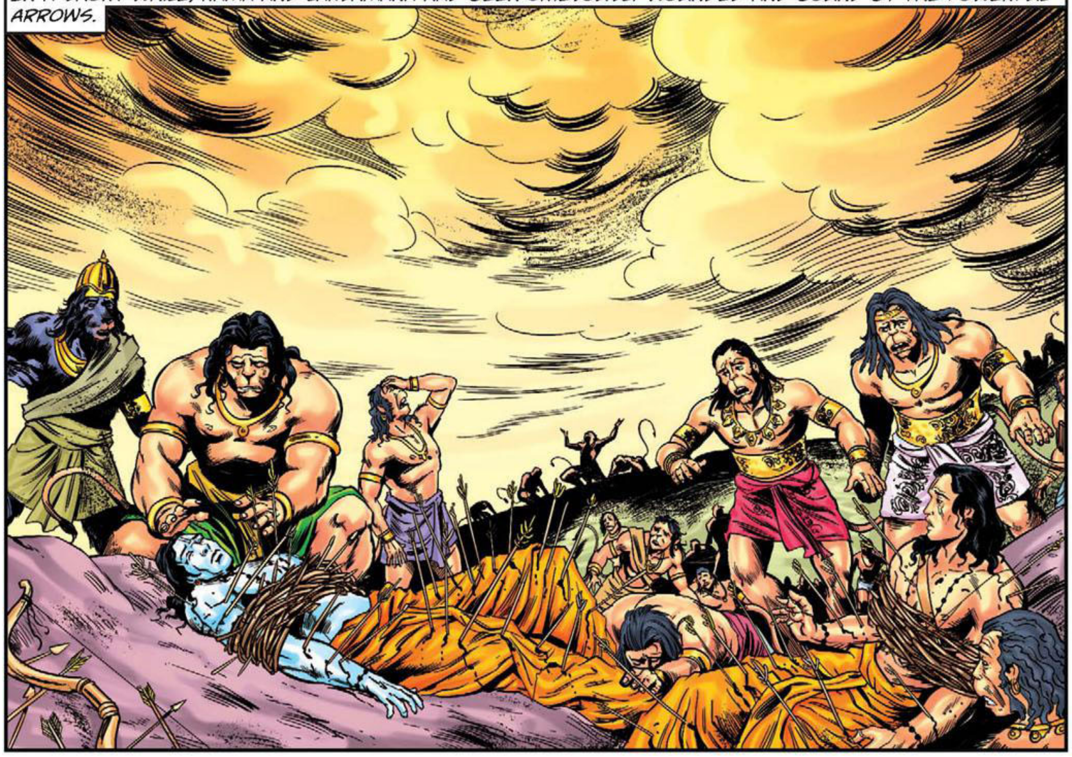
*LONG-TAILED, BLACK-FACED VANARAS

^INDRAJIT USED ARROWS WITH MANY KINDS OF HEADS - NAROCHA AND ARDAHNAROCHA (CIRCULAR), BHALLAS (AXE-LIKE), ANJALIKA (SHAPED LIKE JOINED PALMS), VATSADANTA (LIKE THE TEETH OF A CALF), AND KSHURA (WITH RAZOR SHARP EDGES), WITH GOLD FEATHERS AND POLISHED HEADS.

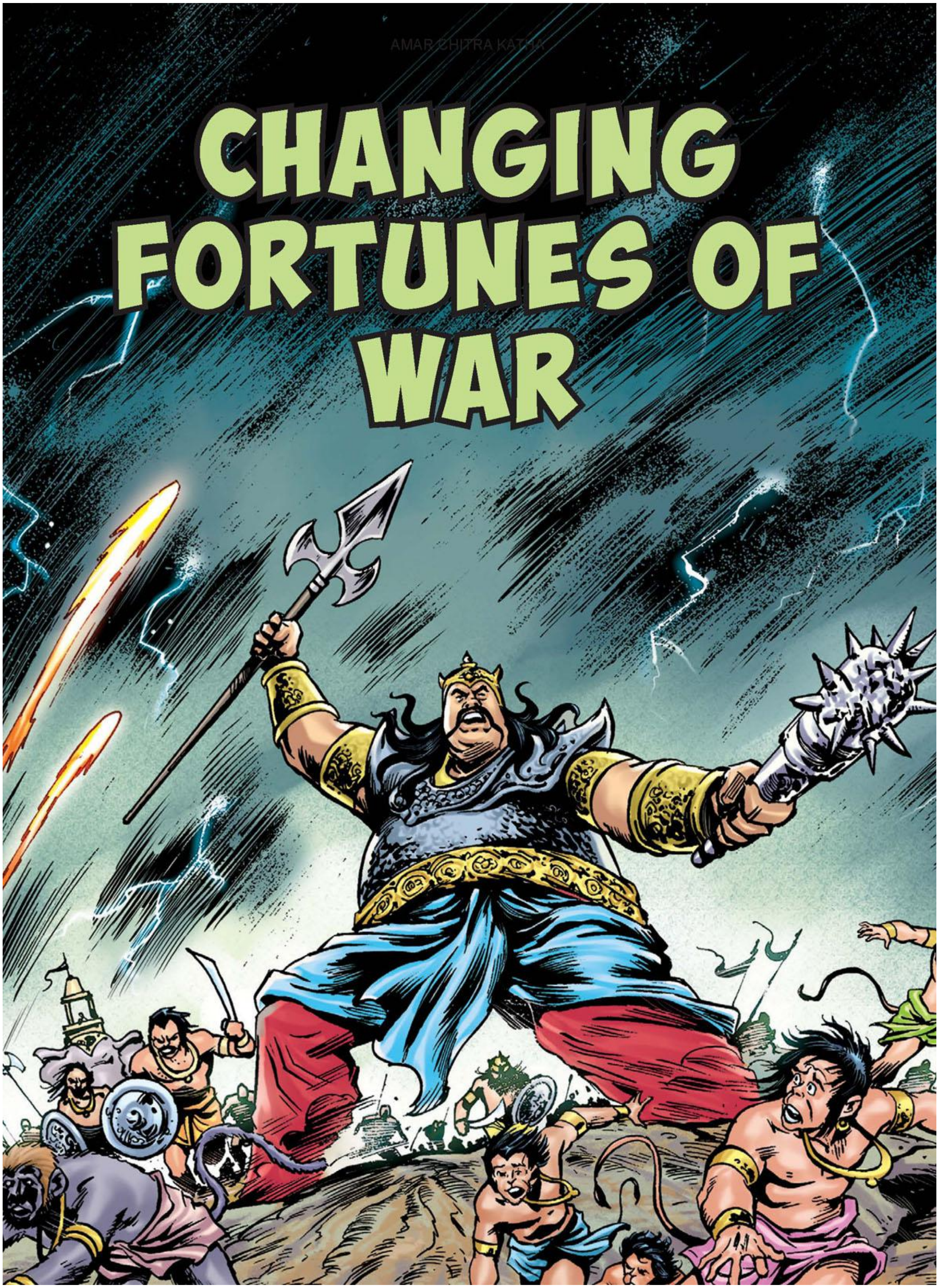
THE VANARA LEADERS SPRANG UP TO LOOK FOR INDRAJIT. BUT -

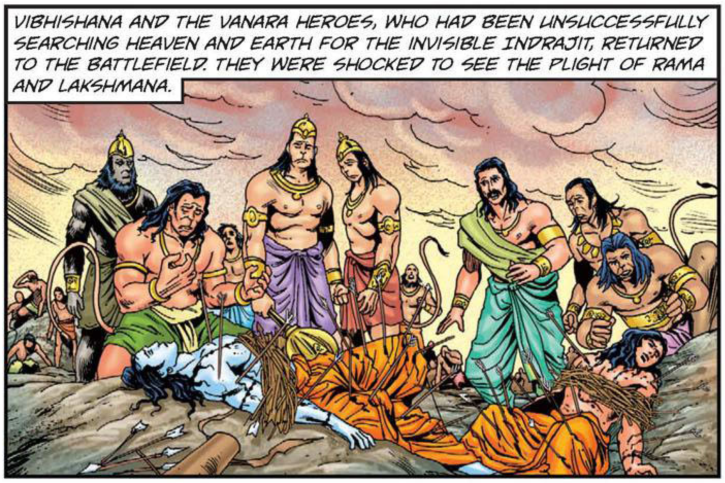

EVEN INDRA CANNOT SEE OR APPROACH ME WHEN I AM INVISIBLE! WHAT CHANCE HAVE YOU, O RAGHAVAS? I SHALL SPEEDILY DESPATCH YOU TO THE ABODE OF YAMA!

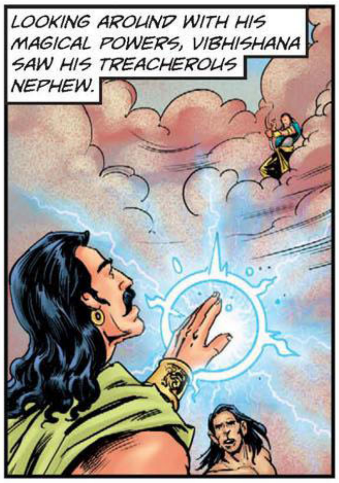
IN A SHORT WHILE, RAMA AND LAKSHMANA HAD BEEN GRIEVOUSLY WOUNDED AND BOUND BY THE POWERFUL ARROWS.

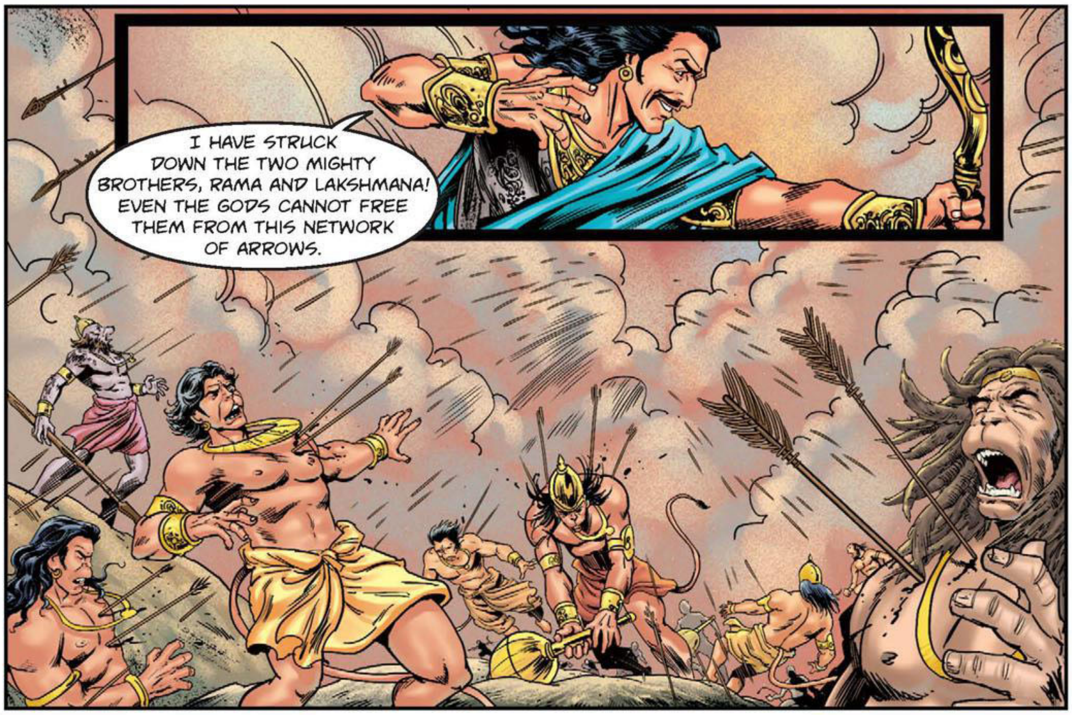


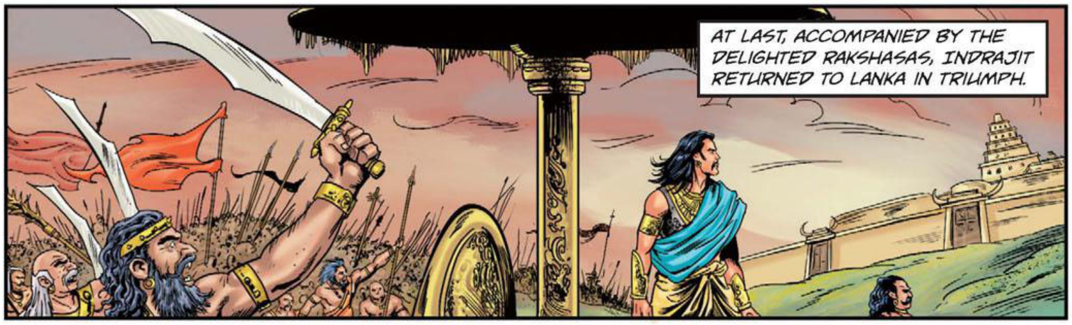
CHANGING FORTUNES OF WAR

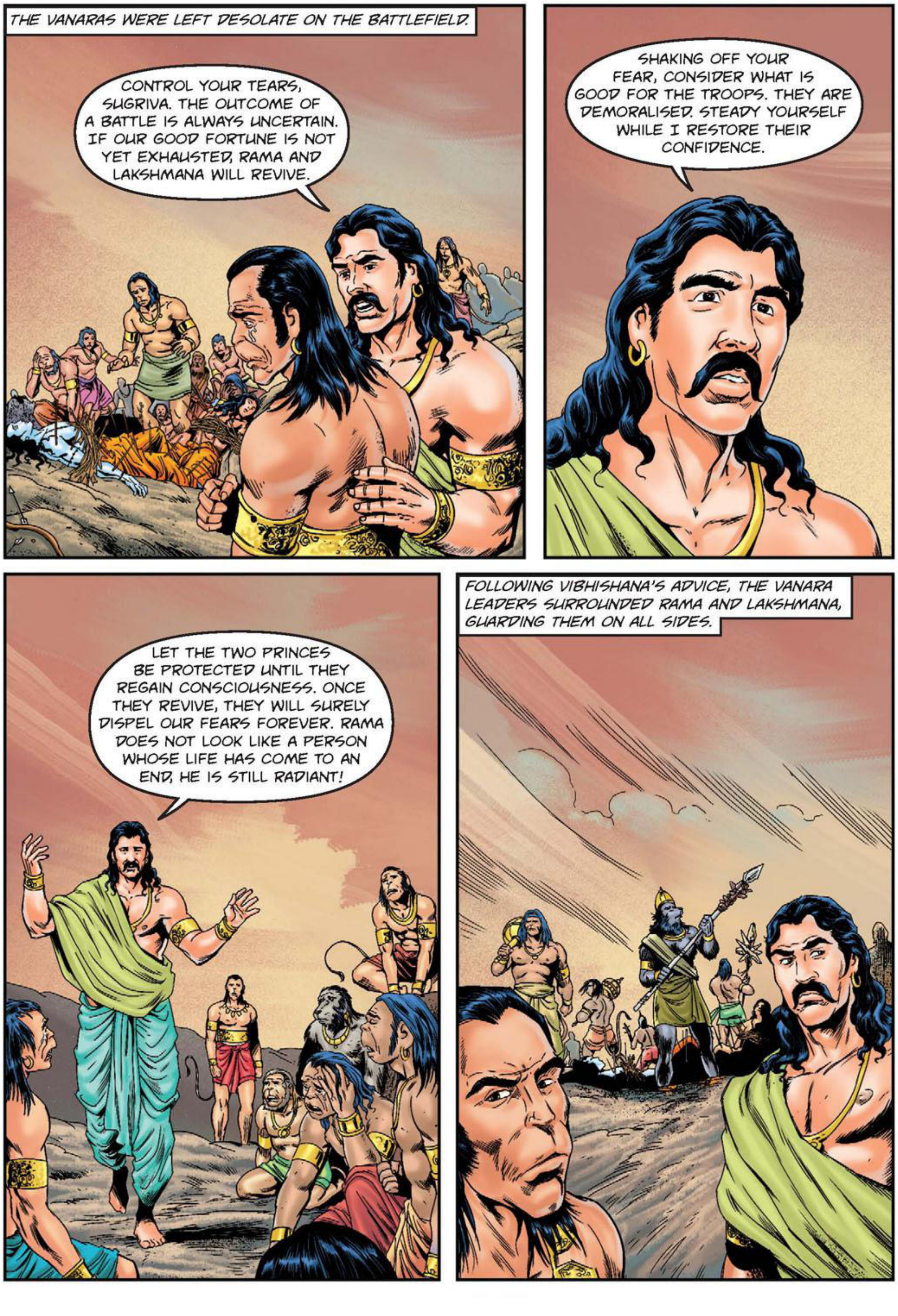


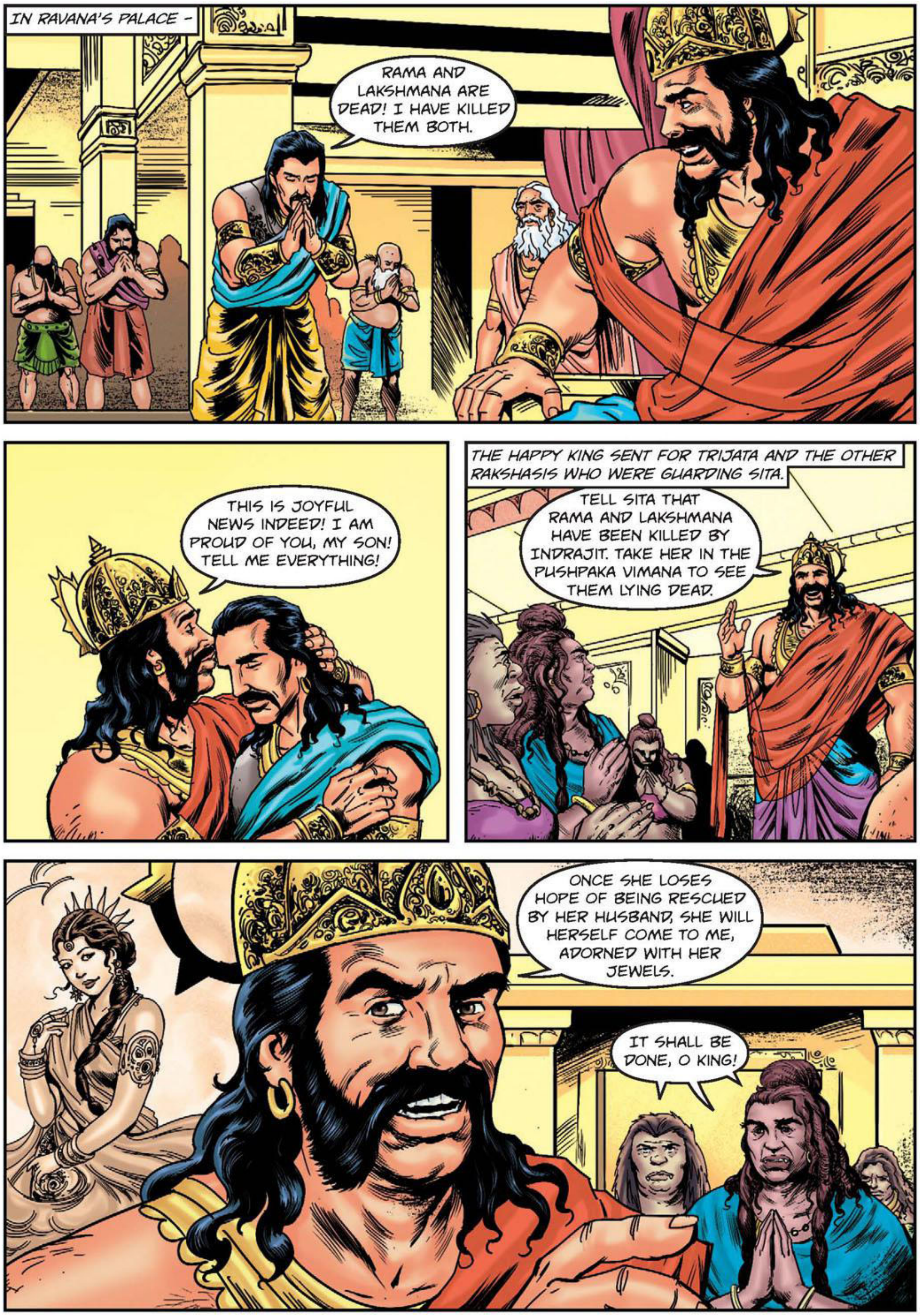

VIBHISHANA AND THE VANARA HEROES, WHO HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFULLY SEARCHING HEAVEN AND EARTH FOR THE INVISIBLE INDRAJIT, RETURNED TO THE BATTLEFIELD. THEY WERE SHOCKED TO SEE THE PLIGHT OF RAMA AND LAKSHMANA.

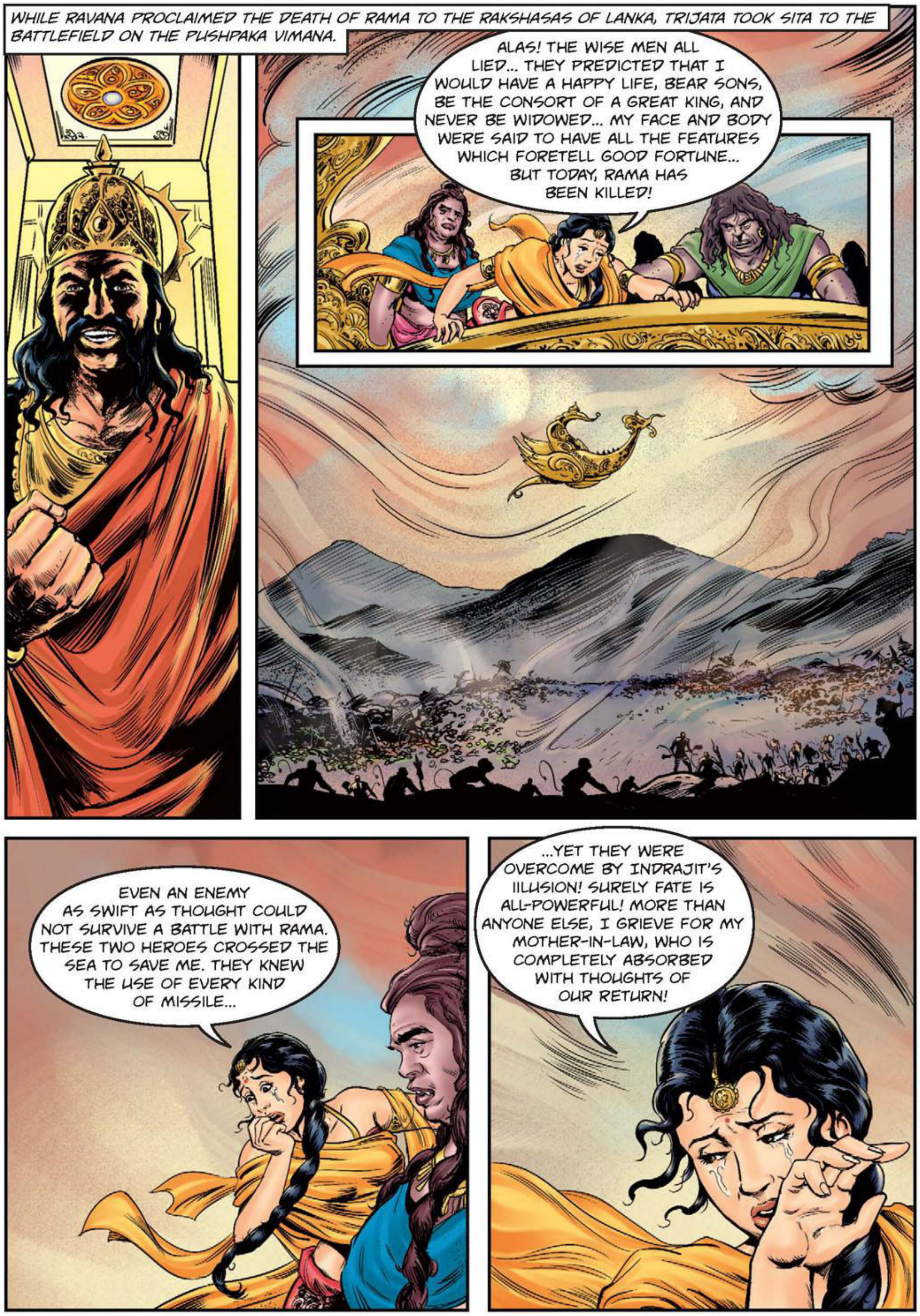

LOOKING AROUND WITH HIS MAGICAL POWERS, VIBHISHANA SAW HIS TREACHEROUS NEPHEW.

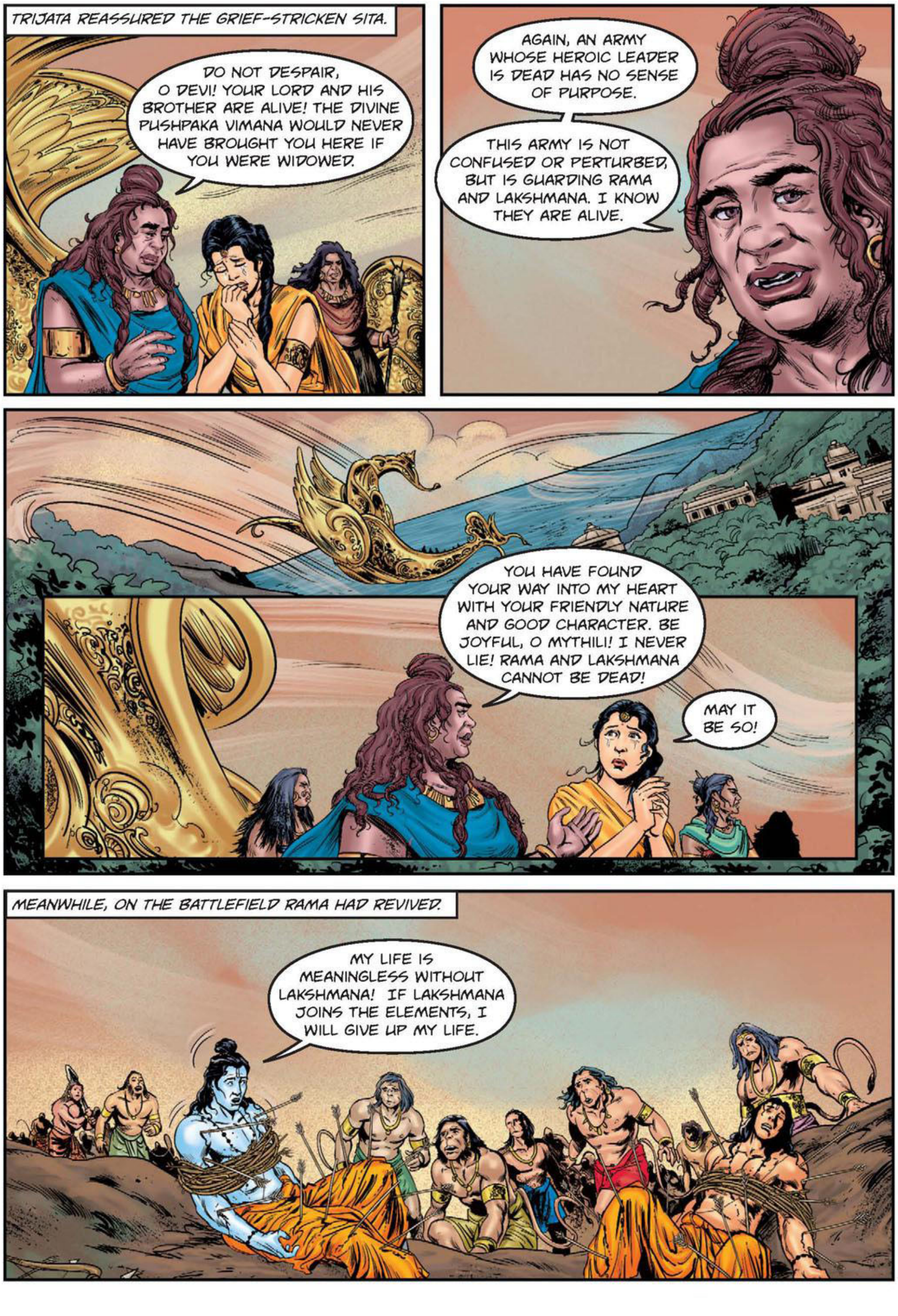

I HAVE STRUCK DOWN THE TWO MIGHTY BROTHERS, RAMA AND LAKSHMANA! EVEN THE GODS CANNOT FREE THEM FROM THIS NETWORK OF ARROWS.

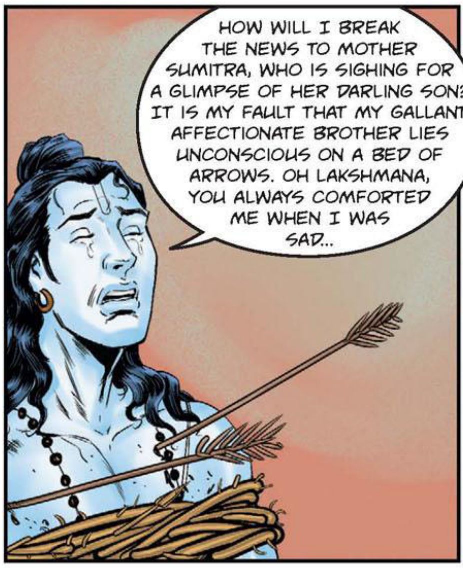

AT LAST, ACCOMPANIED BY THE DELIGHTED RAKSHASAS, INDRAJIT RETURNED TO LANKA IN TRIUMPH.

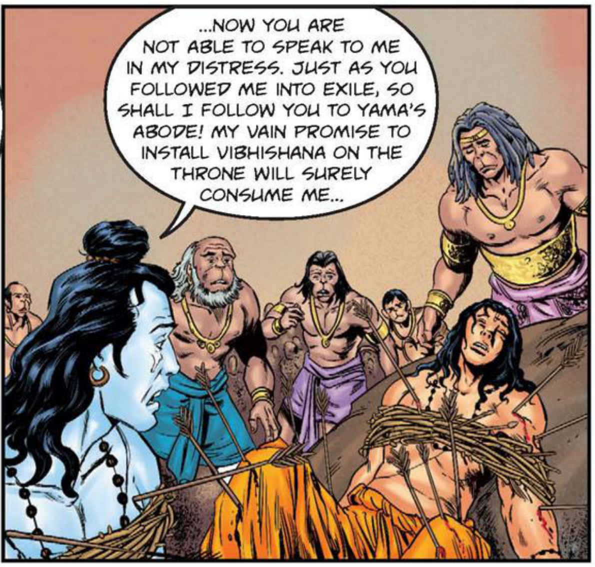

THE VANARAS WERE LEFT DESOLATE ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
CONTROL YOUR TEARS, SUGRIVA. THE OUTCOME OF A BATTLE IS ALWAYS UNCERTAIN. IF OUR GOOD FORTUNE IS NOT YET EXHAUSTED, RAMA AND LAKSHMANA WILL REVIVE.
SHAKING OFF YOUR FEAR, CONSIDER WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE TROOPS. THEY ARE DEMORALISED. STEADY YOURSELF WHILE I RESTORE THEIR CONFIDENCE.
LET THE TWO PRINCES BE PROTECTED UNTIL THEY REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS. ONCE THEY REVIVE, THEY WILL SURELY DISPEL OUR FEARS FOREVER. RAMA DOES NOT LOOK LIKE A PERSON WHOSE LIFE HAS COME TO AN END, HE IS STILL RADIANT!
FOLLOWING VIBHISHANA'S ADVICE, THE VANARA LEADERS SURROUNDED RAMA AND LAKSHMANA, GUARDING THEM ON ALL SIDES.

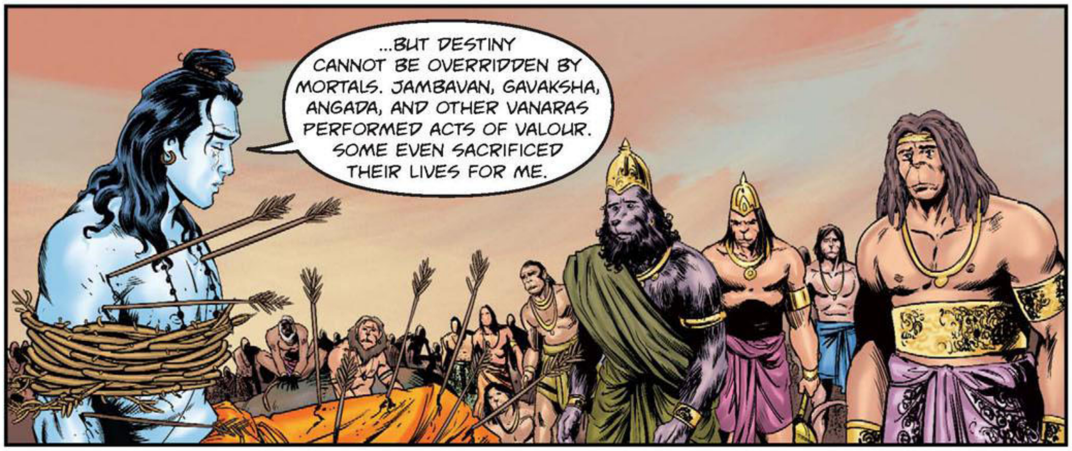

IN RAVANA'S PALACE -
RAMA AND LAKSHMANA ARE DEAD! I HAVE KILLED THEM BOTH.
THIS IS JOYFUL NEWS INDEED! I AM PROUD OF YOU, MY SON! TELL ME EVERYTHING!
THE HAPPY KING SENT FOR TRIJATA AND THE OTHER RAKSHASIS WHO WERE GUARDING SITA.
TELL SITA THAT RAMA AND LAKSHMANA HAVE BEEN KILLED BY INDRAJIT. TAKE HER IN THE PUSHPAKA VIMANA TO SEE THEM LYING DEAD.
ONCE SHE LOSES HOPE OF BEING RESCUED BY HER HUSBAND, SHE WILL HERSELF COME TO ME, ADORNED WITH HER JEWELS.
IT SHALL BE DONE, O KING!

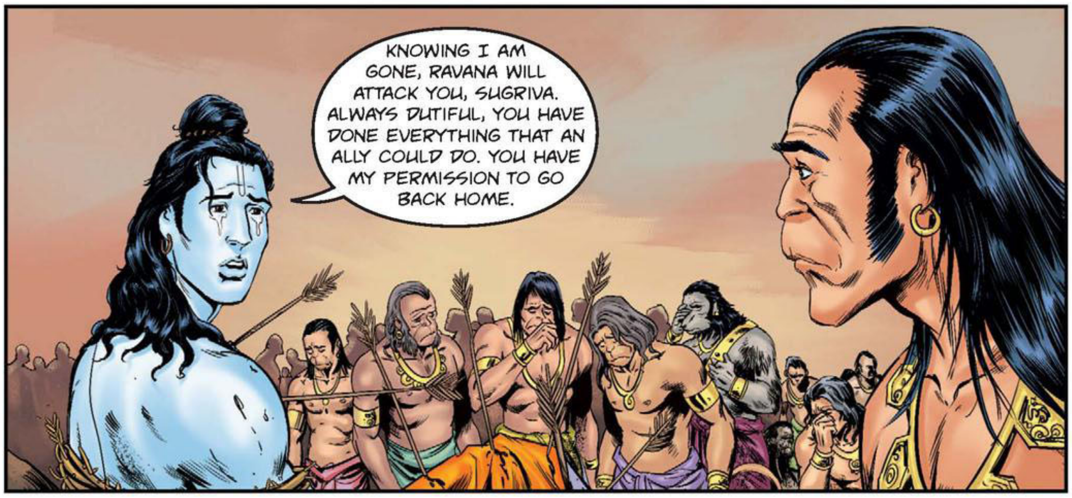

WHILE RAVANA PROCLAIMED THE DEATH OF RAMA TO THE RAKSHASAS OF LANKA, TRIJATA TOOK SITA TO THE BATTLEFIELD ON THE PUSHPAKA VIMANA.
ALAS! THE WISE MEN ALL LIED... THEY PREDICTED THAT I WOULD HAVE A HAPPY LIFE, BEAR SONS, BE THE CONSORT OF A GREAT KING, AND NEVER BE WIDOWED... MY FACE AND BODY WERE SAID TO HAVE ALL THE FEATURES WHICH FORETELL GOOD FORTUNE... BUT TODAY, RAMA HAS BEEN KILLED!
EVEN AN ENEMY AS SWIFT AS THOUGHT COULD NOT SURVIVE A BATTLE WITH RAMA. THESE TWO HEROES CROSSED THE SEA TO SAVE ME. THEY KNEW THE USE OF EVERY KIND OF MISSILE...
...YET THEY WERE OVERCOME BY INDRAJIT'S ILLUSION! SURELY FATE IS ALL-POWERFUL! MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, I GRIEVE FOR MY MOTHER-IN-LAW, WHO IS COMPLETELY ABSORBED WITH THOUGHTS OF OUR RETURN!

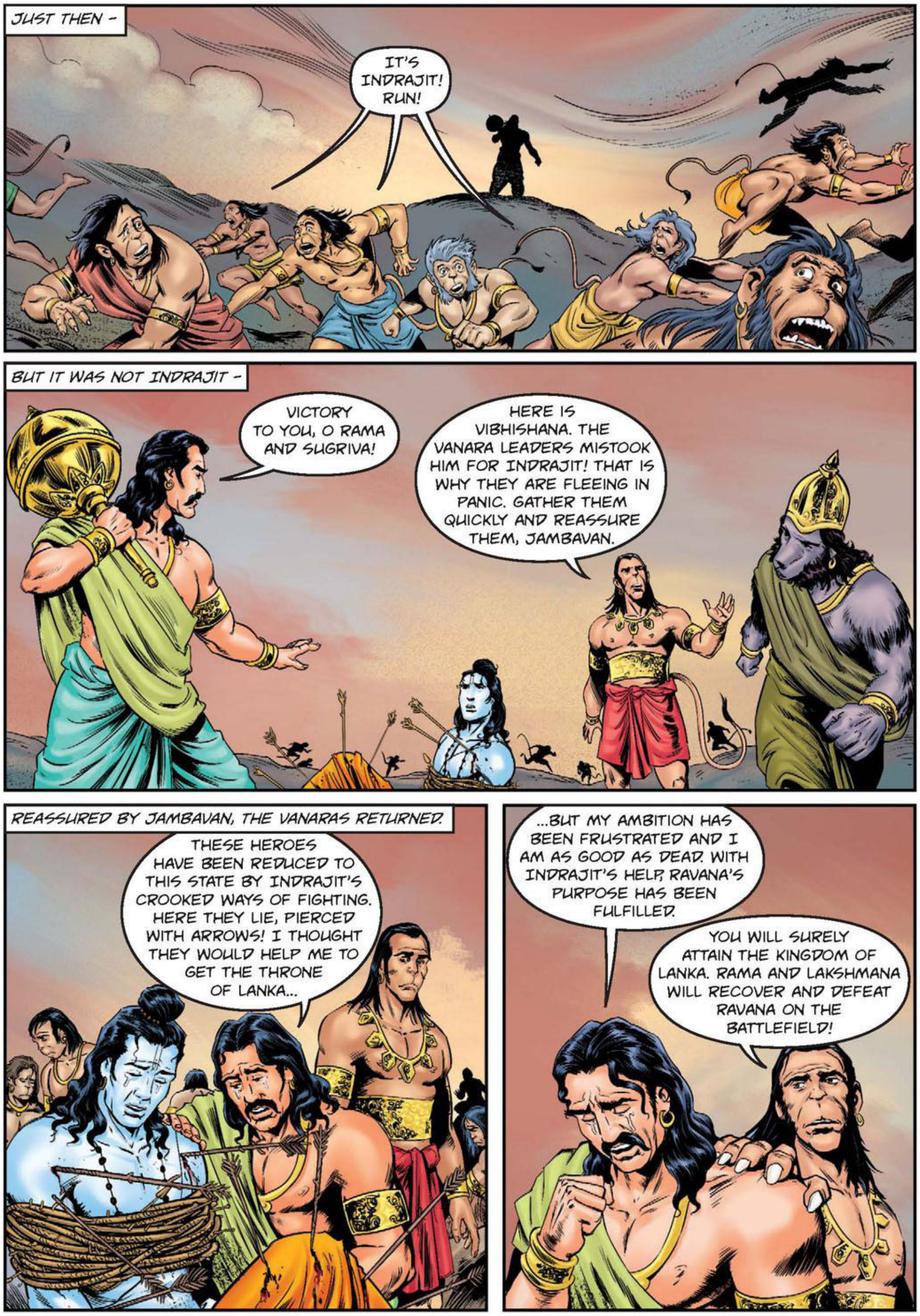

TRIJATA REASSURED THE GRIEF-STRICKEN SITA.
DO NOT DESPAIR, O DEVI! YOUR LORD AND HIS BROTHER ARE ALIVE! THE DIVINE PUSHPAKA VIMANA WOULD NEVER HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE IF YOU WERE WIDOWED.
AGAIN, AN ARMY WHOSE HEROIC LEADER IS DEAD HAS NO SENSE OF PURPOSE.
THIS ARMY IS NOT CONFUSED OR PERTURBED, BUT IS GUARDING RAMA AND LAKSHMANA. I KNOW THEY ARE ALIVE.
YOU HAVE FOUND YOUR WAY INTO MY HEART WITH YOUR FRIENDLY NATURE AND GOOD CHARACTER. BE JOYFUL, O MYTHILI! I NEVER LIE! RAMA AND LAKSHMANA CANNOT BE DEAD!
MAY IT BE SO!
MEANWHILE, ON THE BATTLEFIELD RAMA HAD REVIVED.
MY LIFE IS MEANINGLESS WITHOUT LAKSHMANA! IF LAKSHMANA JOINS THE ELEMENTS, I WILL GIVE UP MY LIFE.

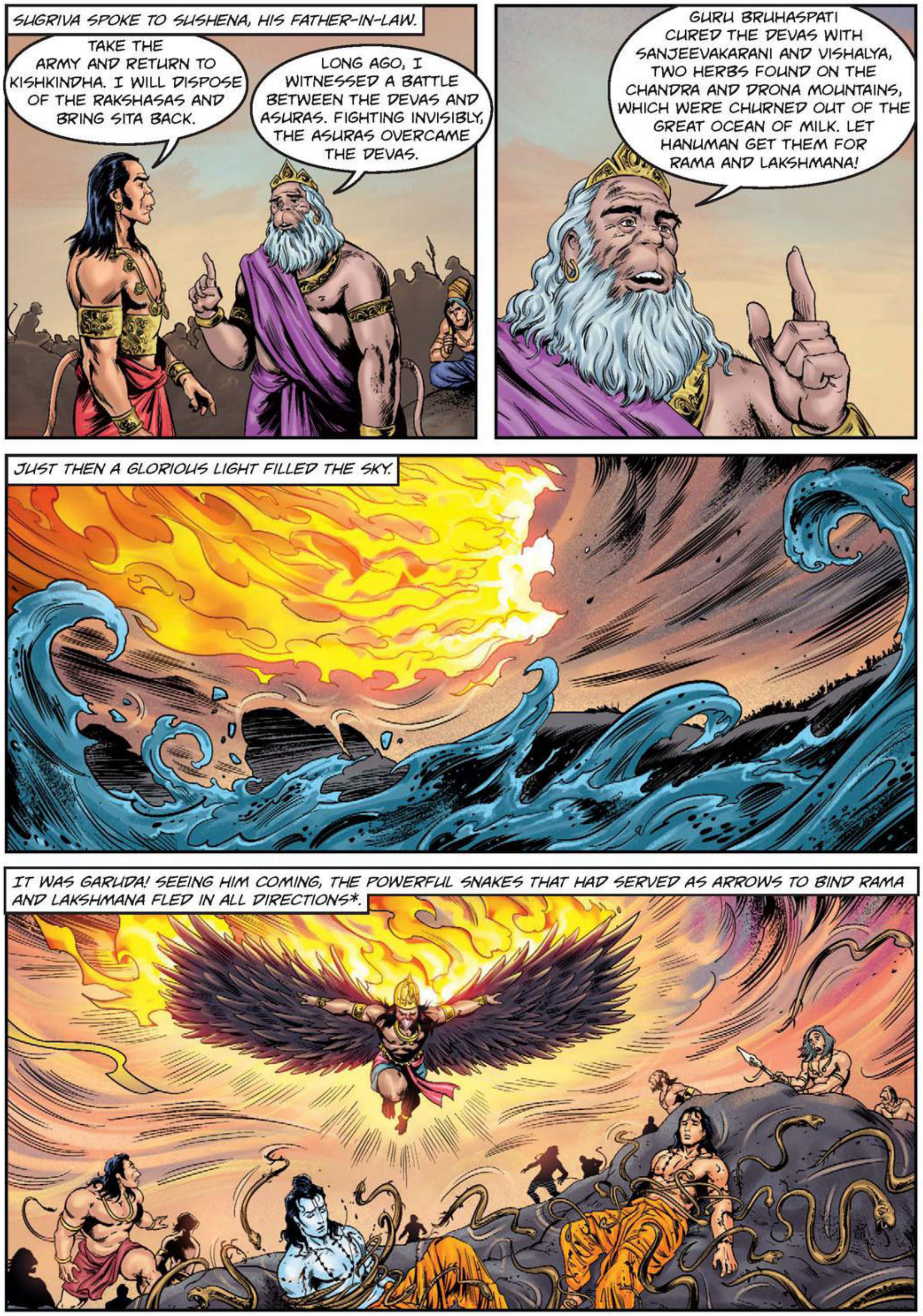

HOW WILL I BREAK THE NEWS TO MOTHER SUMITRA, WHO IS SIGHING FOR A GLIMPSE OF HER DARLING SON? IT IS MY FAULT THAT MY GALLANT, AFFECTIONATE BROTHER LIES UNCONSCIOUS ON A BED OF ARROWS. OH LAKSHMANA, YOU ALWAYS COMFORTED ME WHEN I WAS SAD...


...NOW YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO SPEAK TO ME IN MY DISTRESS. JUST AS YOU FOLLOWED ME INTO EXILE, SO SHALL I FOLLOW YOU TO YAMA'S ABODE! MY VAIN PROMISE TO INSTALL VIBHISHANA ON THE THRONE WILL SURELY CONSUME ME...

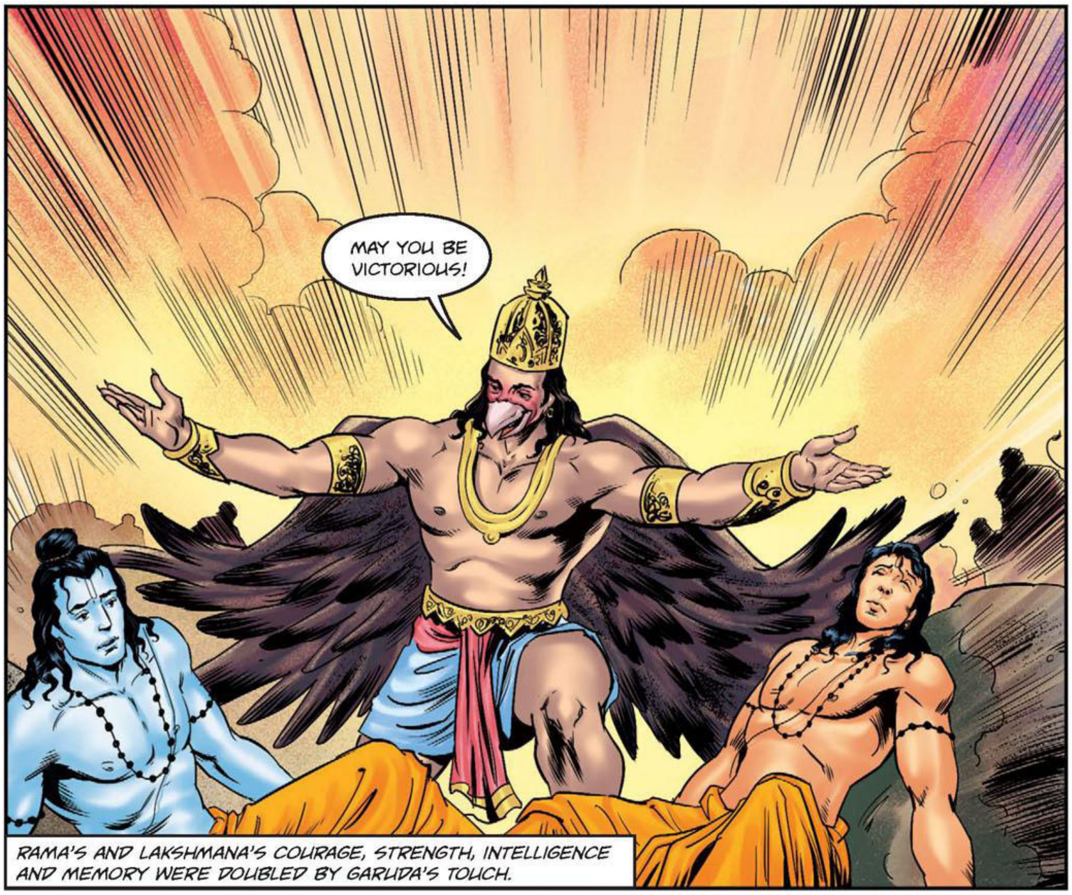

...BUT DESTINY CANNOT BE OVERRIDDEN BY MORTALS. JAMBAVAN, GAVAKSHA, ANGADA, AND OTHER VANARAS PERFORMED ACTS OF VALOUR. SOME EVEN SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES FOR ME.

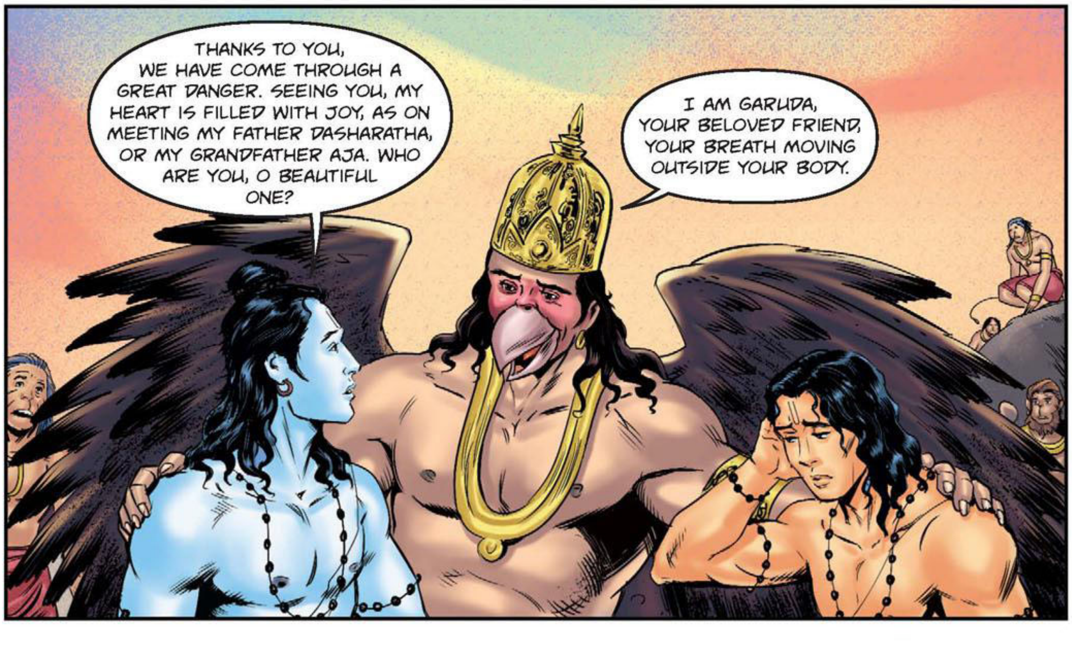

KNOWING I AM GONE, RAVANA WILL ATTACK YOU, SUGRIVA. ALWAYS DUTIFUL, YOU HAVE DONE EVERYTHING THAT AN ALLY COULD DO. YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO GO BACK HOME.

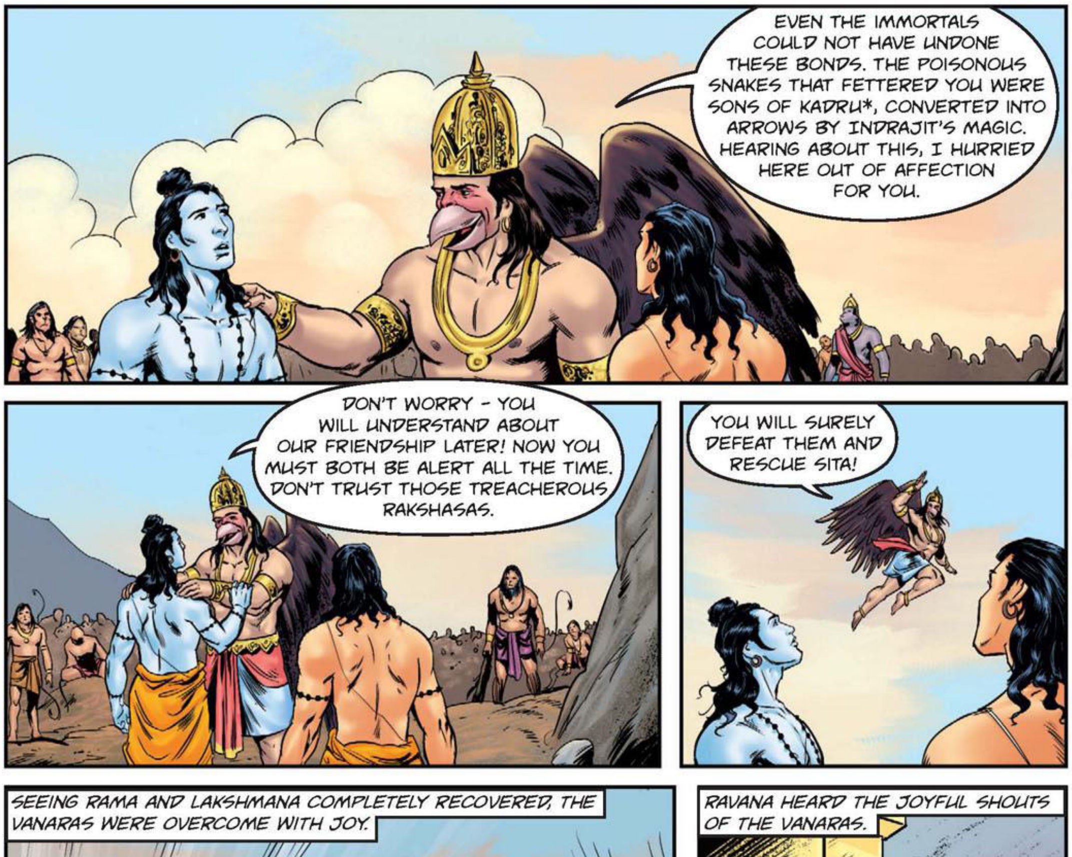

JUST THEN -
IT'S INDRAJIT! RUN!
BUT IT WAS NOT INDRAJIT -
VICTORY TO YOU, O RAMA AND SUGRIVA!
HERE IS VIBHISHANA. THE VANARA LEADERS MISTOOK HIM FOR INDRAJIT! THAT IS WHY THEY ARE FLEEING IN PANIC. GATHER THEM QUICKLY AND REASSURE THEM, JAMBAVAN.
REASSURED BY JAMBAVAN, THE VANARAS RETURNED.
THESE HEROES HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO THIS STATE BY INDRAJIT'S CROOKED WAYS OF FIGHTING. HERE THEY LIE, PIERCED WITH ARROWS! I THOUGHT THEY WOULD HELP ME TO GET THE THRONE OF LANKA...
...BUT MY AMBITION HAS BEEN FRUSTRATED AND I AM AS GOOD AS DEAD. WITH INDRAJIT'S HELP, RAVANA'S PURPOSE HAS BEEN FULFILLED.
YOU WILL SURELY ATTAIN THE KINGDOM OF LANKA. RAMA AND LAKSHMANA WILL RECOVER AND DEFEAT RAVANA ON THE BATTLEFIELD!


SUGRIVA SPOKE TO SUSHENA, HIS FATHER-IN-LAW.
TAKE THE ARMY AND RETURN TO KISHKINDHA. I WILL DISPOSE OF THE RAKSHASAS AND BRING SITA BACK.
LONG AGO, I WITNESSED A BATTLE BETWEEN THE DEVAS AND ASURAS. FIGHTING INVISIBLY, THE ASURAS OVERCAME THE DEVAS.
GURU BRUHASPATI CURED THE DEVAS WITH SANJEEVAKARANI AND VISHALYA, TWO HERBS FOUND ON THE CHANDRA AND DRONA MOUNTAINS, WHICH WERE CHURNED OUT OF THE GREAT OCEAN OF MILK. LET HANUMAN GET THEM FOR RAMA AND LAKSHMANA!
JUST THEN A GLORIOUS LIGHT FILLED THE SKY.
IT WAS GARUDA! SEEING HIM COMING, THE POWERFUL SNAKES THAT HAD SERVED AS ARROWS TO BIND RAMA AND LAKSHMANA FLED IN ALL DIRECTIONS*.

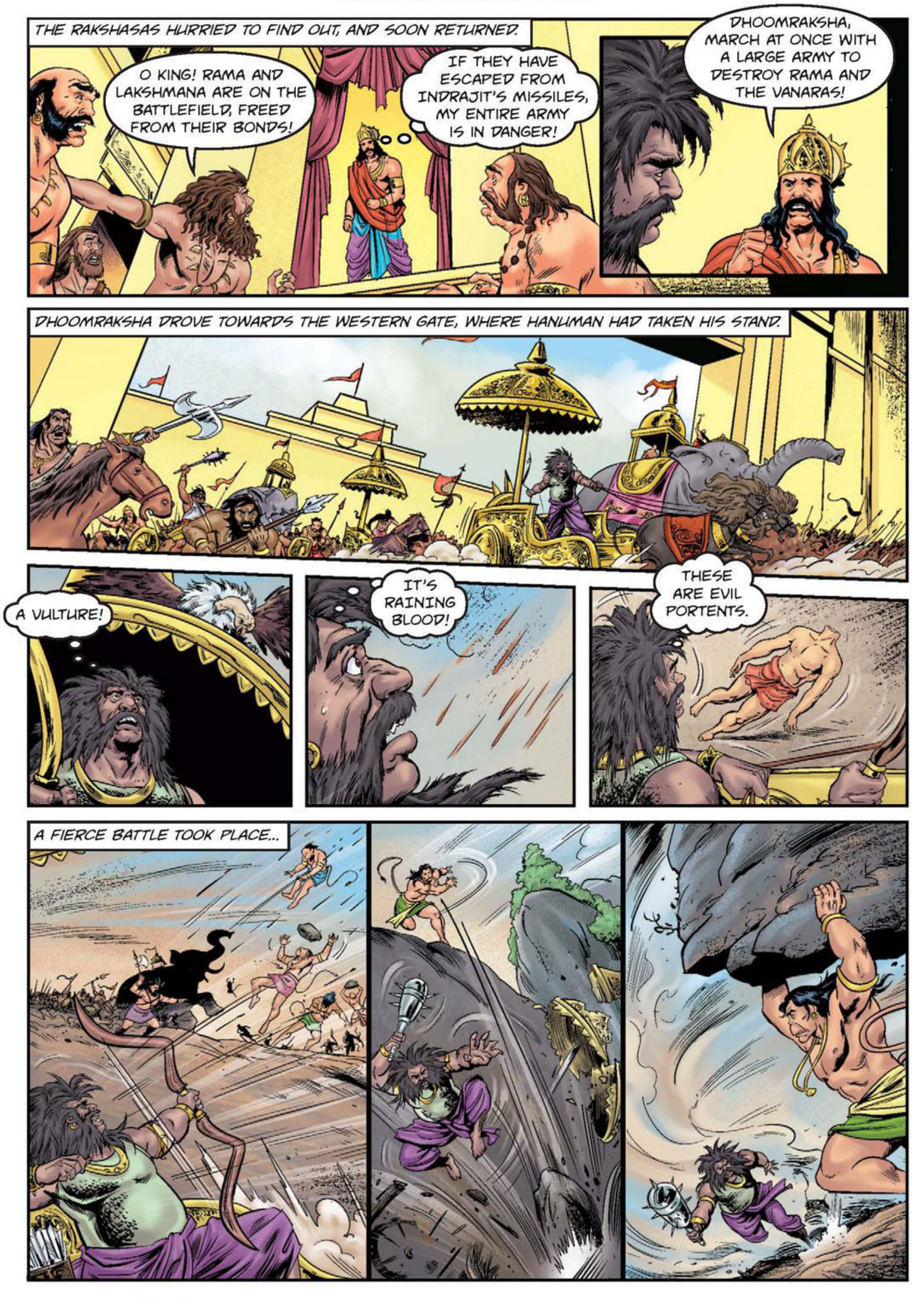
* GARUDA IS THE MORTAL ENEMY OF SNAKES.

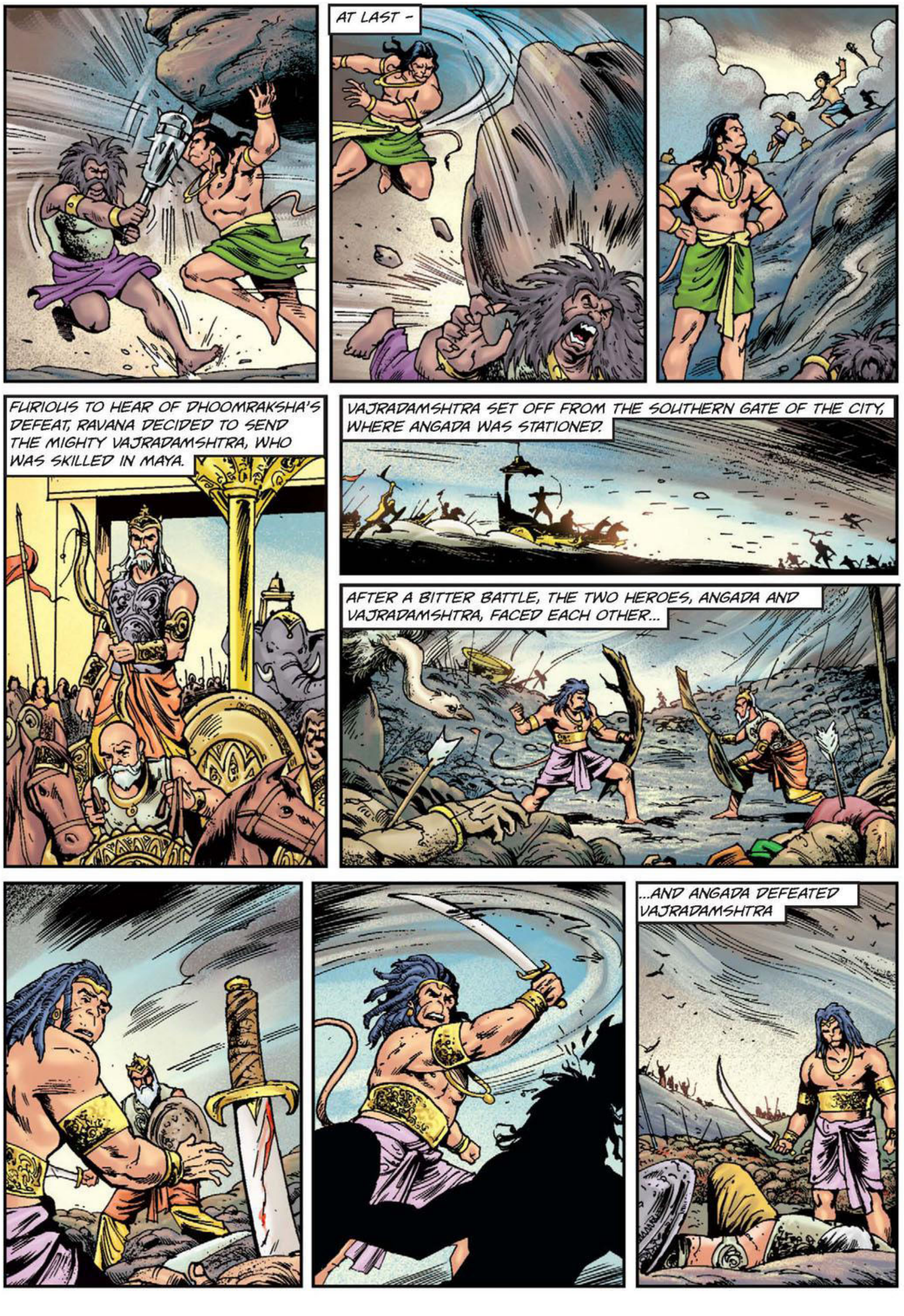

MAY YOU BE VICTORIOUS!
RAMA'S AND LAKSHMANA'S COURAGE, STRENGTH, INTELLIGENCE AND MEMORY WERE DOUBLED BY GARUDA'S TOUCH.

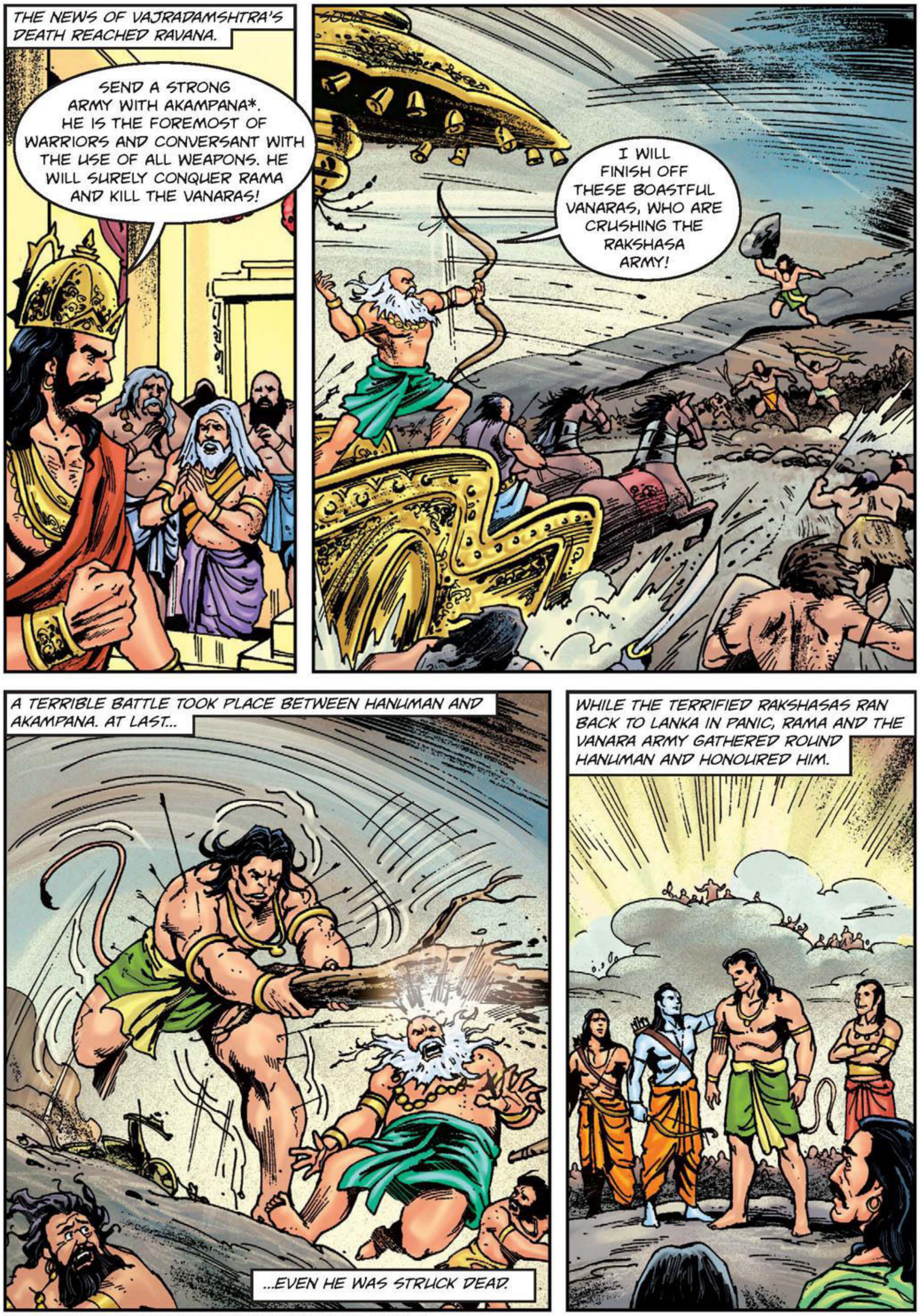

THANKS TO YOU, WE HAVE COME THROUGH A GREAT DANGER. SEEING YOU, MY HEART IS FILLED WITH JOY, AS ON MEETING MY FATHER DASHARATHA, OR MY GRANDFATHER AJA. WHO ARE YOU, O BEAUTIFUL ONE?
I AM GARUDA, YOUR BELOVED FRIEND, YOUR BREATH MOVING OUTSIDE YOUR BODY.


EVEN THE IMMORTALS COULD NOT HAVE UNDONE THESE BONDS. THE POISONOUS SNAKES THAT FETTERED YOU WERE SONS OF KADRU*, CONVERTED INTO ARROWS BY INDRAJIT'S MAGIC. HEARING ABOUT THIS, I HURRIED HERE OUT OF AFFECTION FOR YOU.
DON'T WORRY - YOU WILL UNDERSTAND ABOUT OUR FRIENDSHIP LATER! NOW YOU MUST BOTH BE ALERT ALL THE TIME. DON'T TRUST THOSE TREACHEROUS RAKSHASAS.
YOU WILL SURELY DEFEAT THEM AND RESCUE SITA!
SEEING RAMA AND LAKSHMANA COMPLETELY RECOVERED, THE VANARAS WERE OVERCOME WITH JOY.
RAVANA HEARD THE JOYFUL SHOUTS OF THE VANARAS.
THE VERY SEA IS AGITATED BY THE VANARAS' EXCITED ROARS! GO AND SEE WHY THEY ARE CELEBRATING. I AM WORRIED ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THOSE TWO BROTHERS, WHO LAY BOUND WITH SHARP ARROWS.

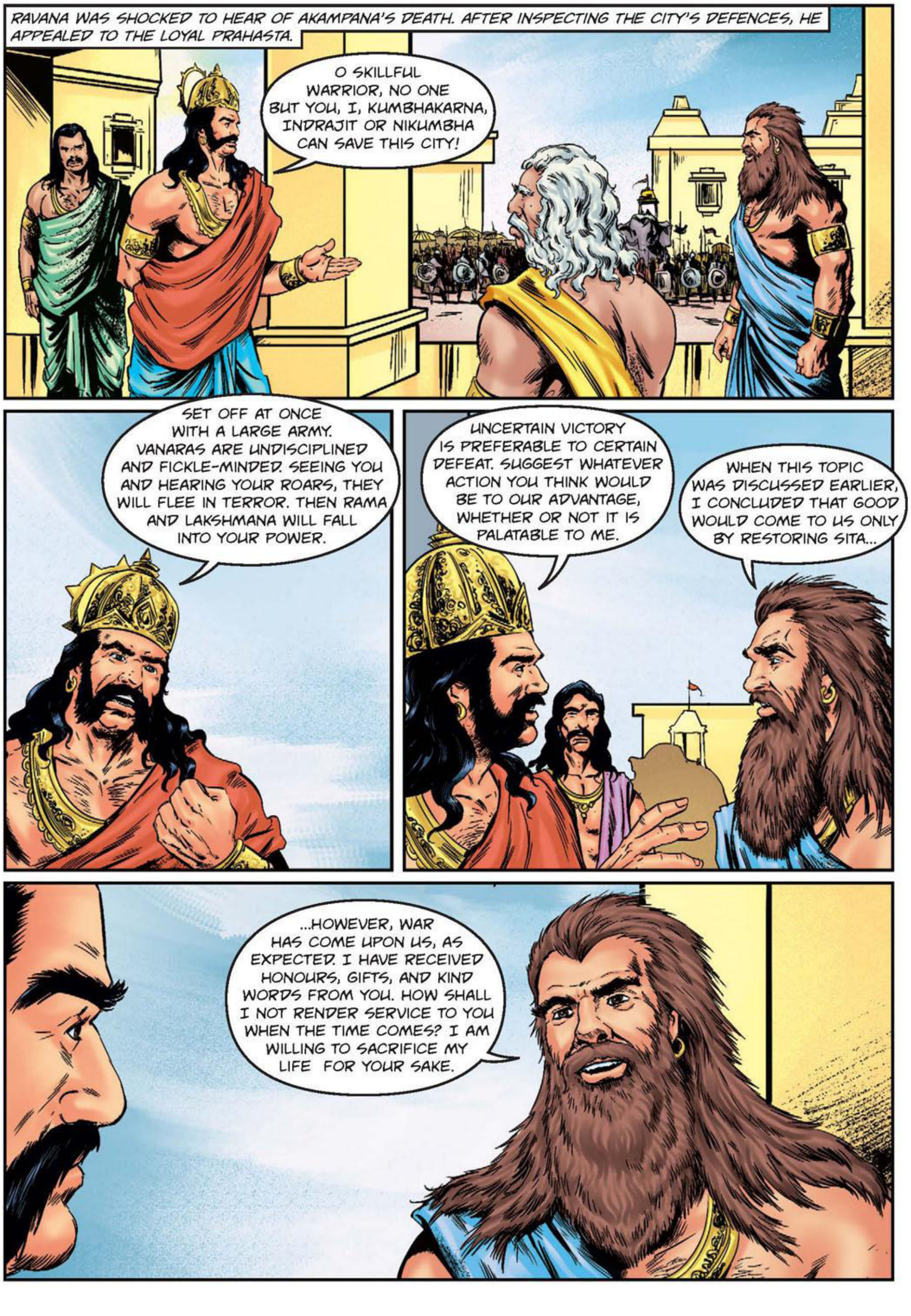
*DAUGHTER OF DAKSHA PRAJAPATI AND MOTHER OF THE NAGAS

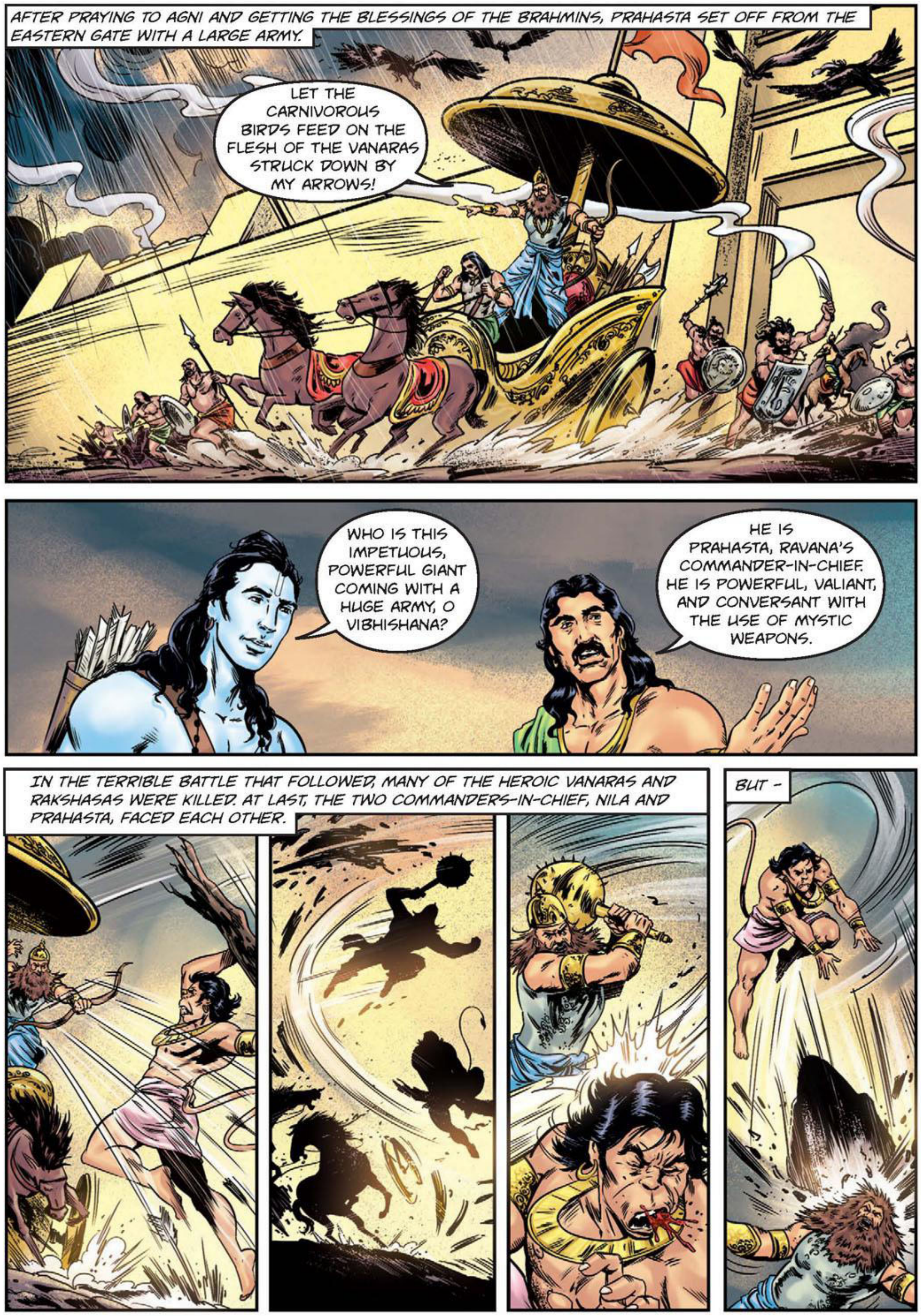

THE RAKSHASAS HURRIED TO FIND OUT, AND SOON RETURNED.
O KING! RAMA AND LAKSHMANA ARE ON THE BATTLEFIELD, FREED FROM THEIR BONDS!
IF THEY HAVE ESCAPED FROM INDRAJIT'S MISSILES, MY ENTIRE ARMY IS IN DANGER!
DHOOMRAKSHA, MARCH AT ONCE WITH A LARGE ARMY TO DESTROY RAMA AND THE VANARAS!
DHOOMRAKSHA DROVE TOWARDS THE WESTERN GATE, WHERE HANUMAN HAD TAKEN HIS STAND.
A VULTURE!
IT'S RAINING BLOOD!
THESE ARE EVIL PORTENTS.
A FIERCE BATTLE TOOK PLACE...

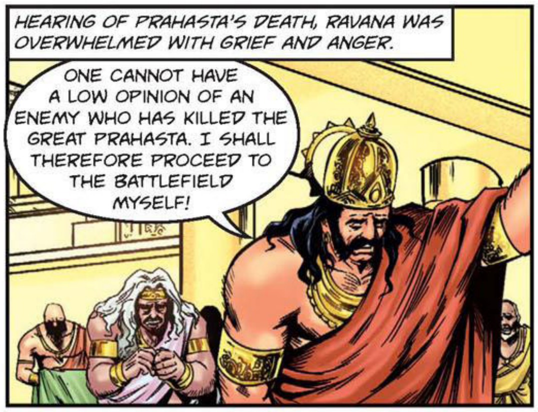

AT LAST -
FURIOUS TO HEAR OF DHOOMRAKSHA'S DEFEAT, RAVANA DECIDED TO SEND THE MIGHTY VAJRADAMSHTRA, WHO WAS SKILLED IN MAYA.
VAJRADAMSHTRA SET OFF FROM THE SOUTHERN GATE OF THE CITY, WHERE ANGADA WAS STATIONED.
AFTER A BITTER BATTLE, THE TWO HEROES, ANGADA AND VAJRADAMSHTRA, FACED EACH OTHER...
...AND ANGADA DEFEATED VAJRADAMSHTRA

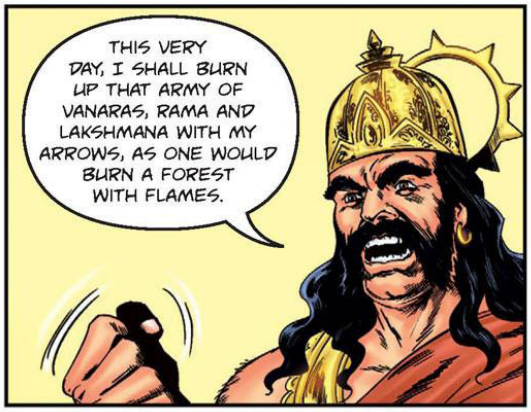

THE NEWS OF VAJRADAMSHTRA'S DEATH REACHED RAVANA.
SEND A STRONG ARMY WITH AKAMPANA*. HE IS THE FOREMOST OF WARRIORS AND CONVERSANT WITH THE USE OF ALL WEAPONS. HE WILL SURELY CONQUER RAMA AND KILL THE VANARAS!
I WILL FINISH OFF THESE BOASTFUL VANARAS, WHO ARE CRUSHING THE RAKSHASA ARMY!
A TERRIBLE BATTLE TOOK PLACE BETWEEN HANUMAN AND AKAMPANA. AT LAST...
...EVEN HE WAS STRUCK DEAD.
WHILE THE TERRIFIED RAKSHASAS RAN BACK TO LANKA IN PANIC, RAMA AND THE VANARA ARMY GATHERED ROUND HANUMAN AND HONOURED HIM.

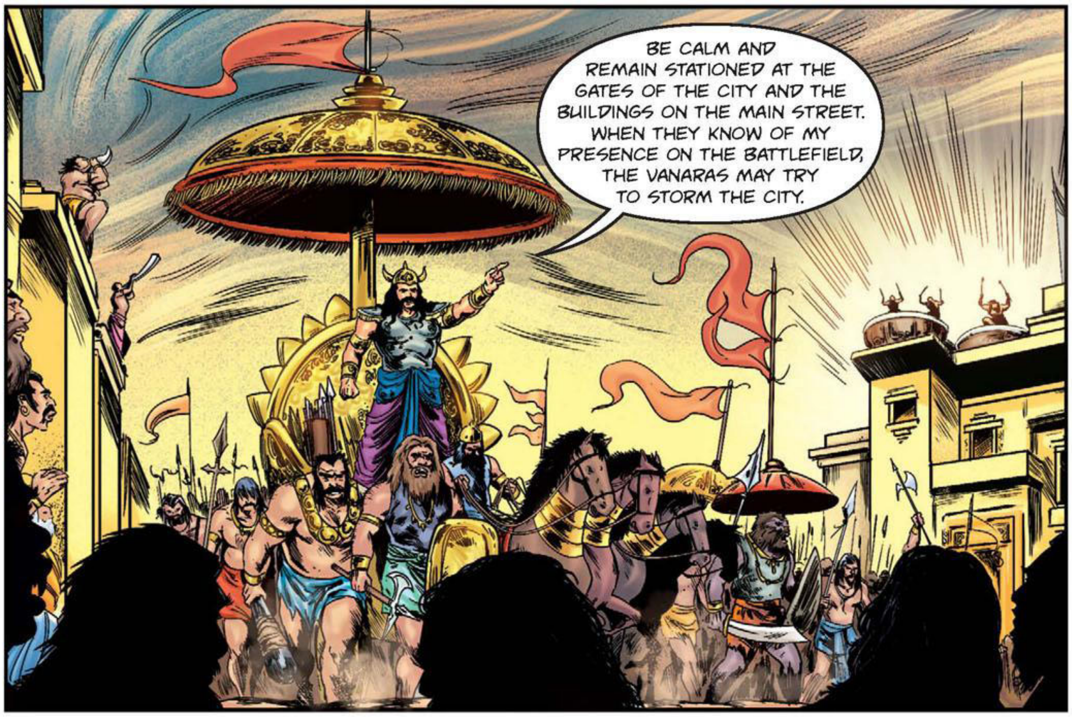
*SO CALLED BECAUSE NOT EVEN THE GODS COULD SHAKE HIM

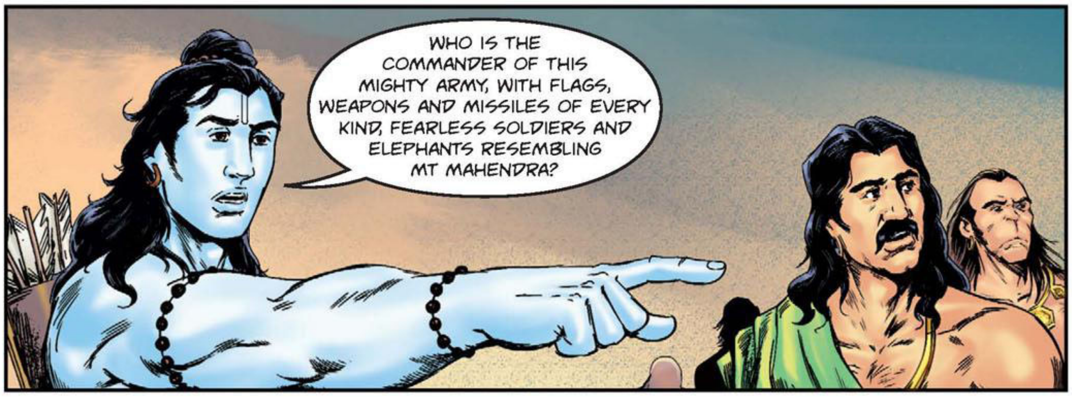

RAVANA WAS SHOCKED TO HEAR OF AKAMPANA'S DEATH. AFTER INSPECTING THE CITY'S DEFENCES, HE APPEALED TO THE LOYAL PRAHASTA.
O SKILLFUL WARRIOR, NO ONE BUT YOU, I, KUMBHAKARNA, INDRAJIT OR NIKUMBHA CAN SAVE THIS CITY!
SET OFF AT ONCE WITH A LARGE ARMY. VANARAS ARE UNDISCIPLINED AND FICKLE-MINDED. SEEING YOU AND HEARING YOUR ROARS, THEY WILL FLEE IN TERROR. THEN RAMA AND LAKSHMANA WILL FALL INTO YOUR POWER.
UNCERTAIN VICTORY IS PREFERABLE TO CERTAIN DEFEAT. SUGGEST WHATEVER ACTION YOU THINK WOULD BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE, WHETHER OR NOT IT IS PALATABLE TO ME.
WHEN THIS TOPIC WAS DISCUSSED EARLIER, I CONCLUDED THAT GOOD WOULD COME TO US ONLY BY RESTORING SITA...
...HOWEVER, WAR HAS COME UPON US, AS EXPECTED. I HAVE RECEIVED HONOURS, GIFTS, AND KIND WORDS FROM YOU. HOW SHALL I NOT RENDER SERVICE TO YOU WHEN THE TIME COMES? I AM WILLING TO SACRIFICE MY LIFE FOR YOUR SAKE.

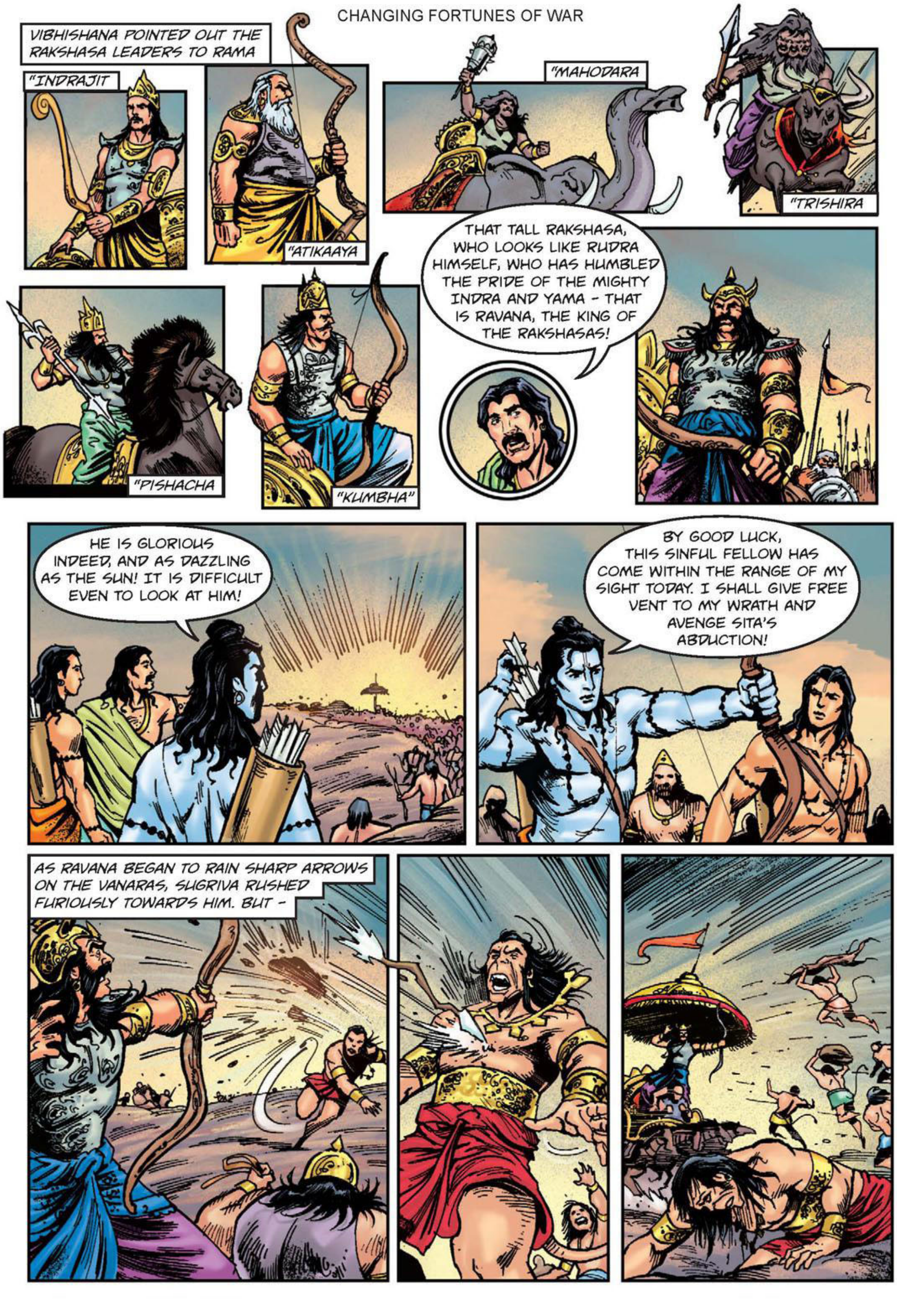

AFTER PRAYING TO AGNI AND GETTING THE BLESSINGS OF THE BRAHMINS, PRAHASTA SET OFF FROM THE EASTERN GATE WITH A LARGE ARMY.
LET THE CARNIVOROUS BIRDS FEED ON THE FLESH OF THE VANARAS STRUCK DOWN BY MY ARROWS!
WHO IS THIS IMPETUOUS, POWERFUL GIANT COMING WITH A HUGE ARMY, O VIBHISHANA?
HE IS PRAHASTA, RAVANA'S COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF. HE IS POWERFUL, VALIANT, AND CONVERSANT WITH THE USE OF MYSTIC WEAPONS.
IN THE TERRIBLE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED, MANY OF THE HEROIC VANARAS AND RAKSHASAS WERE KILLED. AT LAST, THE TWO COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF, NILA AND PRAHASTA, FACED EACH OTHER.
BUT -

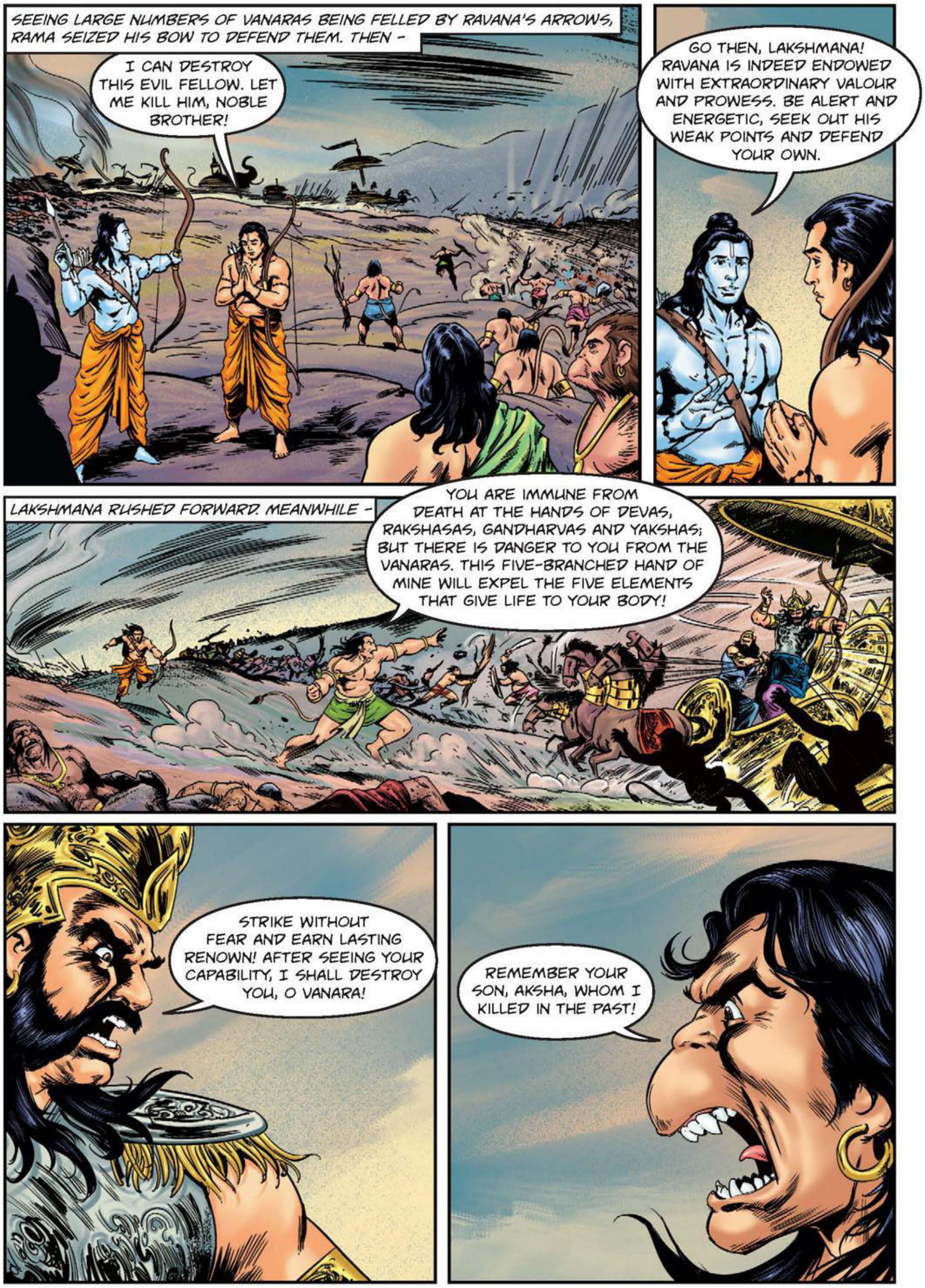

HEARING OF PRAHASTA'S DEATH, RAVANA WAS OVERWHELMED WITH GRIEF AND ANGER.
ONE CANNOT HAVE A LOW OPINION OF AN ENEMY WHO HAS KILLED THE GREAT PRAHASTA. I SHALL THEREFORE PROCEED TO THE BATTLEFIELD MYSELF!

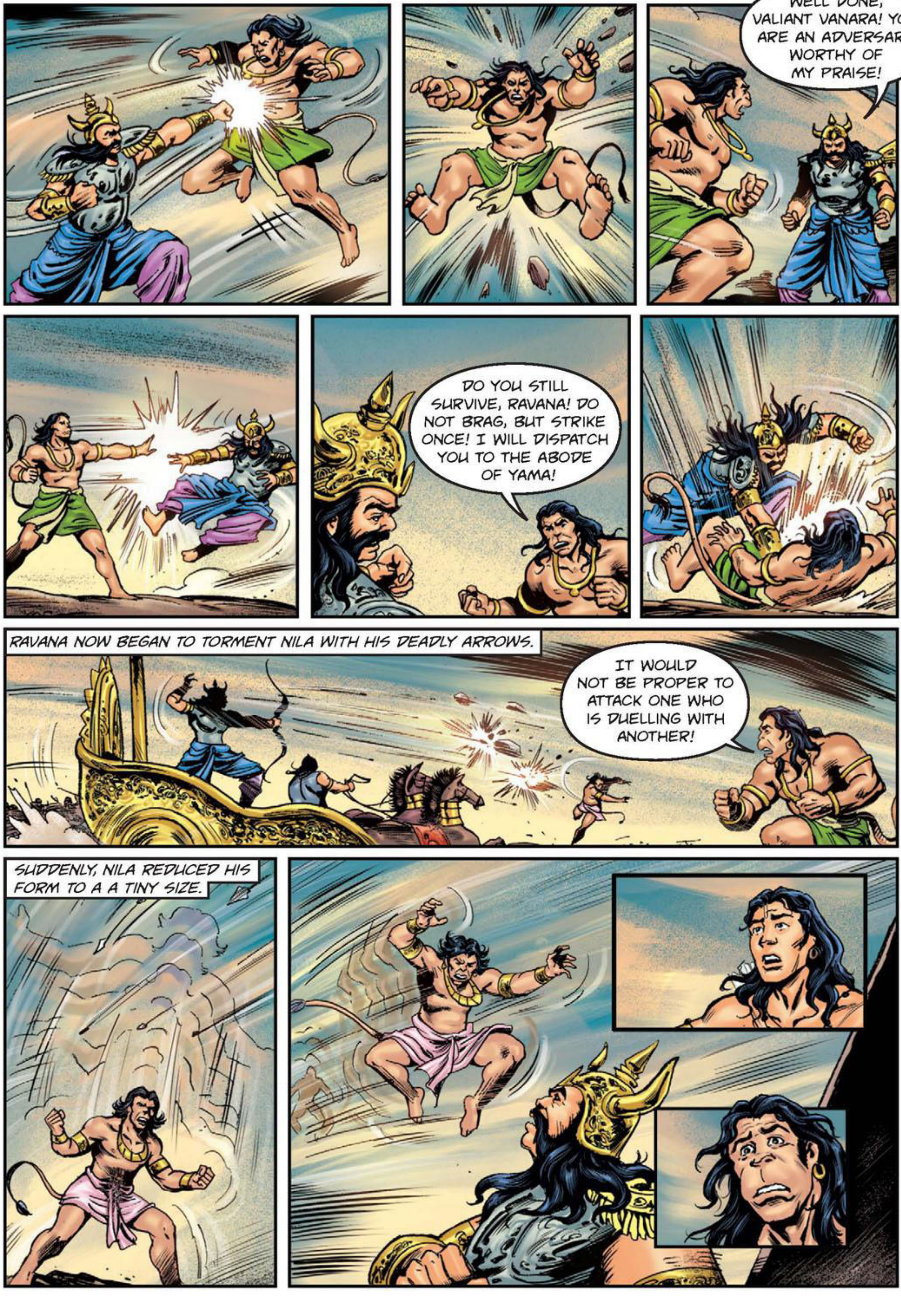

THIS VERY DAY, I SHALL BURN UP THAT ARMY OF VANARAS, RAMA AND LAKSHMANA WITH MY ARROWS, AS ONE WOULD BURN A FOREST WITH FLAMES.

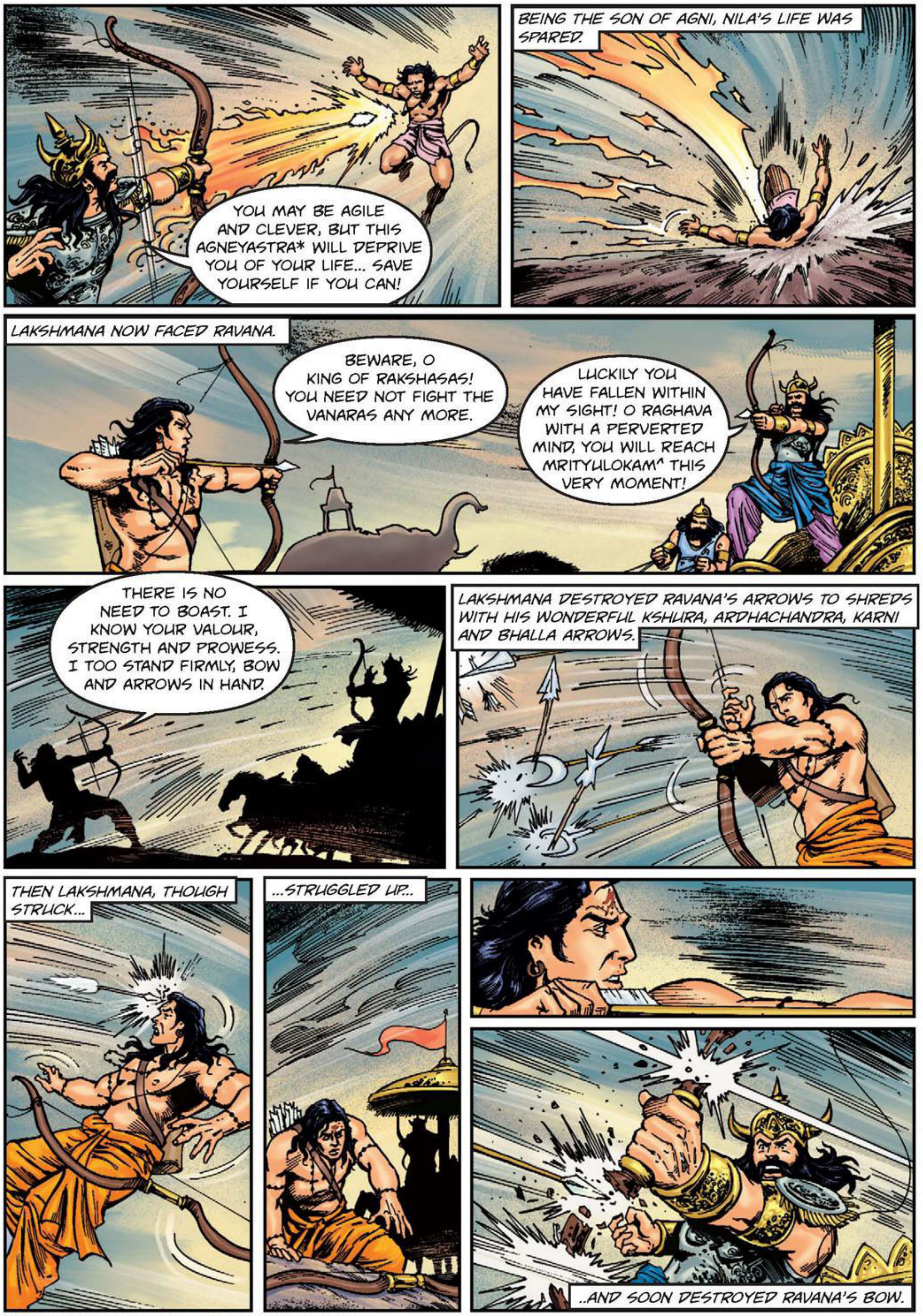

BE CALM AND REMAIN STATIONED AT THE GATES OF THE CITY AND THE BUILDINGS ON THE MAIN STREET. WHEN THEY KNOW OF MY PRESENCE ON THE BATTLEFIELD, THE VANARAS MAY TRY TO STORM THE CITY.


WHO IS THE COMMANDER OF THIS MIGHTY ARMY, WITH FLAGS, WEAPONS AND MISSILES OF EVERY KIND, FEARLESS SOLDIERS AND ELEPHANTS RESEMBLING MT MAHENDRA?


VIBHISHANA POINTED OUT THE RAKSHASA LEADERS TO RAMA
"INDRAJIT
"ATIKAAYA
"MAHODARA
"TRISHIRA
"PISHACHA
"KUMBHA"
THAT TALL RAKSHASA, WHO LOOKS LIKE RUDRA HIMSELF, WHO HAS HUMBLED THE PRIDE OF THE MIGHTY INDRA AND YAMA - THAT IS RAVANA, THE KING OF THE RAKSHASAS!
HE IS GLORIOUS INDEED, AND AS DAZZLING AS THE SUN! IT IS DIFFICULT EVEN TO LOOK AT HIM!
BY GOOD LUCK, THIS SINFUL FELLOW HAS COME WITHIN THE RANGE OF MY SIGHT TODAY. I SHALL GIVE FREE VENT TO MY WRATH AND AVENGE SITA'S ABDUCTION!
AS RAVANA BEGAN TO RAIN SHARP ARROWS ON THE VANARAS, SUGRIVA RUSHED FURIOUSLY TOWARDS HIM. BUT -

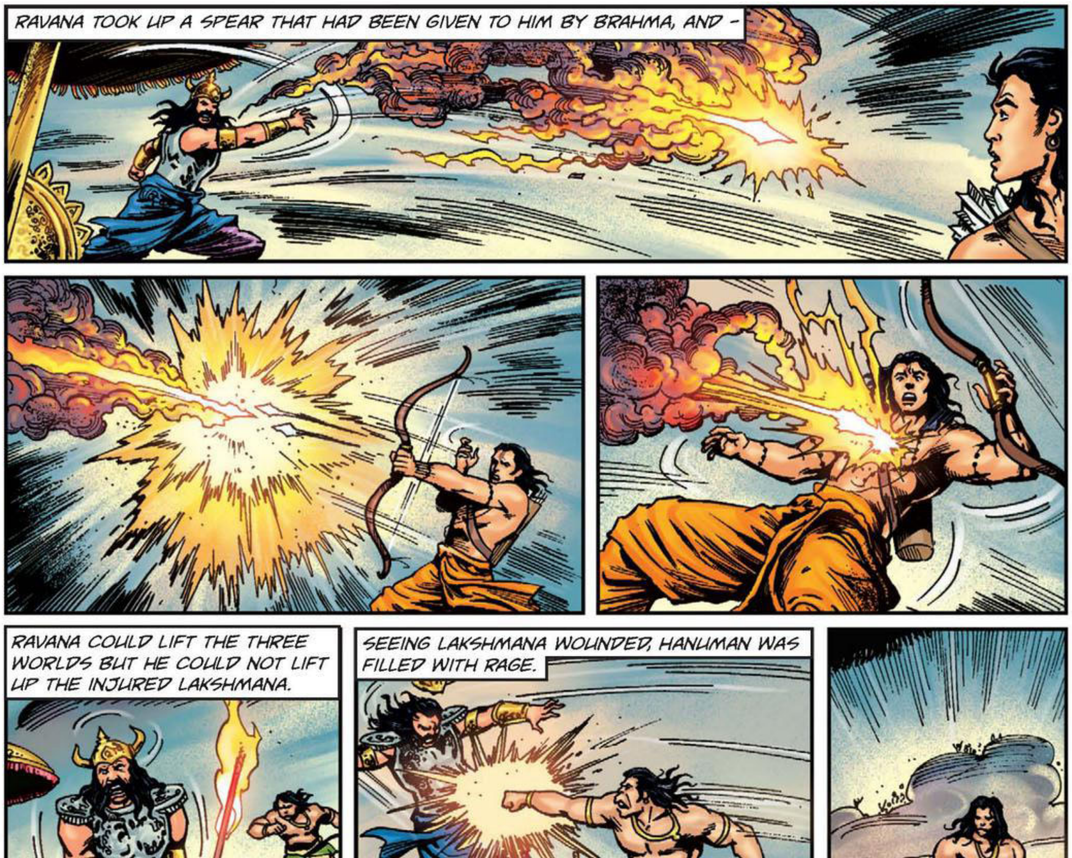

SEEING LARGE NUMBERS OF VANARAS BEING FELLED BY RAVANA'S ARROWS, RAMA SEIZED HIS BOW TO DEFEND THEM. THEN –
I CAN DESTROY THIS EVIL FELLOW. LET ME KILL HIM, NOBLE BROTHER!
GO THEN, LAKSHMANA! RAVANA IS INDEED ENDOWED WITH EXTRAORDINARY VALOUR AND PROWESS. BE ALERT AND ENERGETIC, SEEK OUT HIS WEAK POINTS AND DEFEND YOUR OWN.
LAKSHMANA RUSHED FORWARD. MEANWHILE –
YOU ARE IMMUNE FROM DEATH AT THE HANDS OF DEVAS, RAKSHASAS, GANDHARVAS AND YAKSHAS; BUT THERE IS DANGER TO YOU FROM THE VANARAS. THIS FIVE-BRANCHED HAND OF MINE WILL EXPEL THE FIVE ELEMENTS THAT GIVE LIFE TO YOUR BODY!
STRIKE WITHOUT FEAR AND EARN LASTING RENOWN! AFTER SEEING YOUR CAPABILITY, I SHALL DESTROY YOU, O VANARA!
REMEMBER YOUR SON, AKSHA, WHOM I KILLED IN THE PAST!

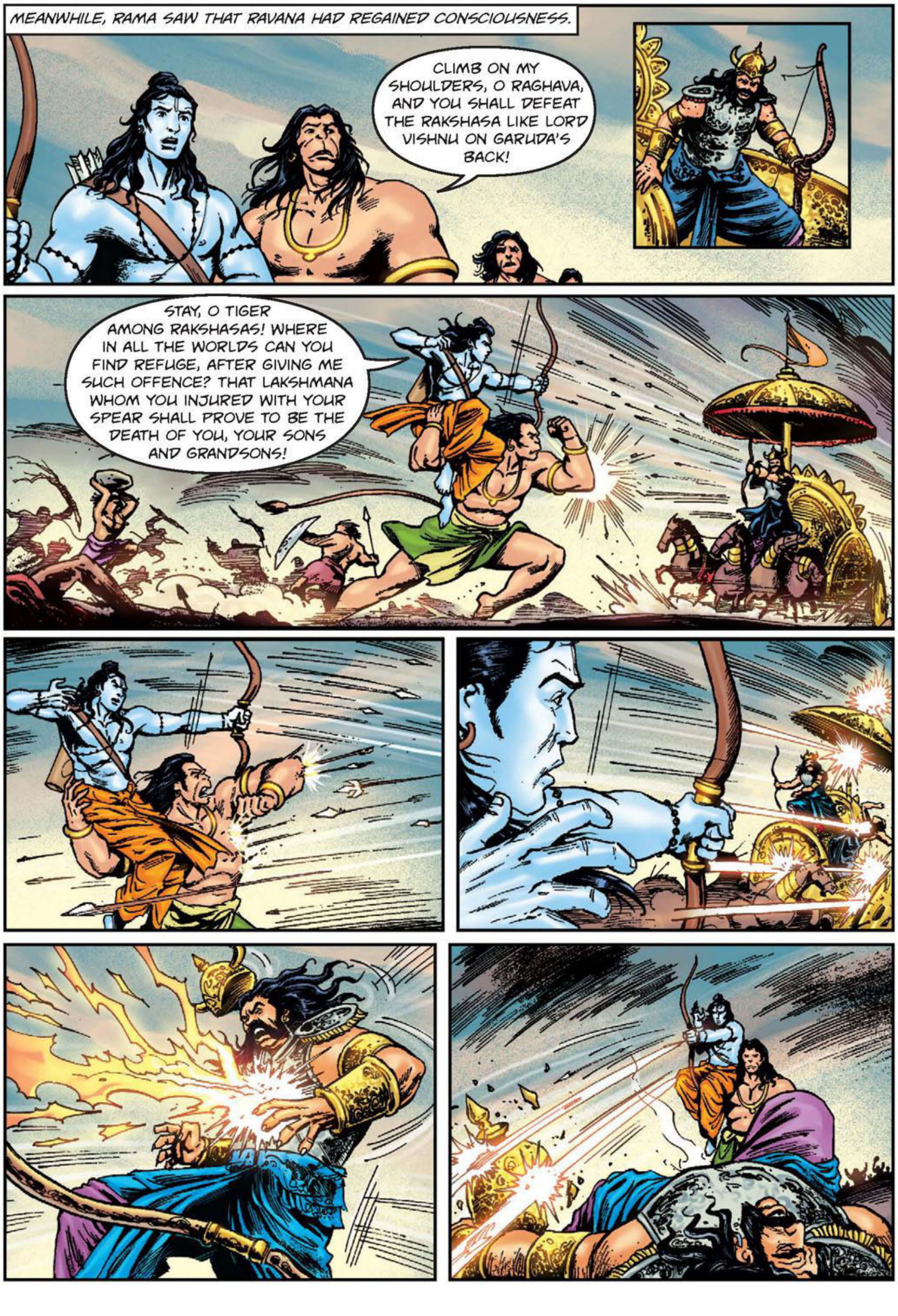

WELL DONE, VALIANT VANARA! YOU ARE AN ADVERSARY WORTHY OF MY PRAISE!
DO YOU STILL SURVIVE, RAVANA! DO NOT BRAG, BUT STRIKE ONCE! I WILL DISPATCH YOU TO THE ABODE OF YAMA!
RAVANA NOW BEGAN TO TORMENT NILA WITH HIS DEADLY ARROWS.
IT WOULD NOT BE PROPER TO ATTACK ONE WHO IS DUELLING WITH ANOTHER!
SUDDENLY, NILA REDUCED HIS FORM TO A A TINY SIZE.

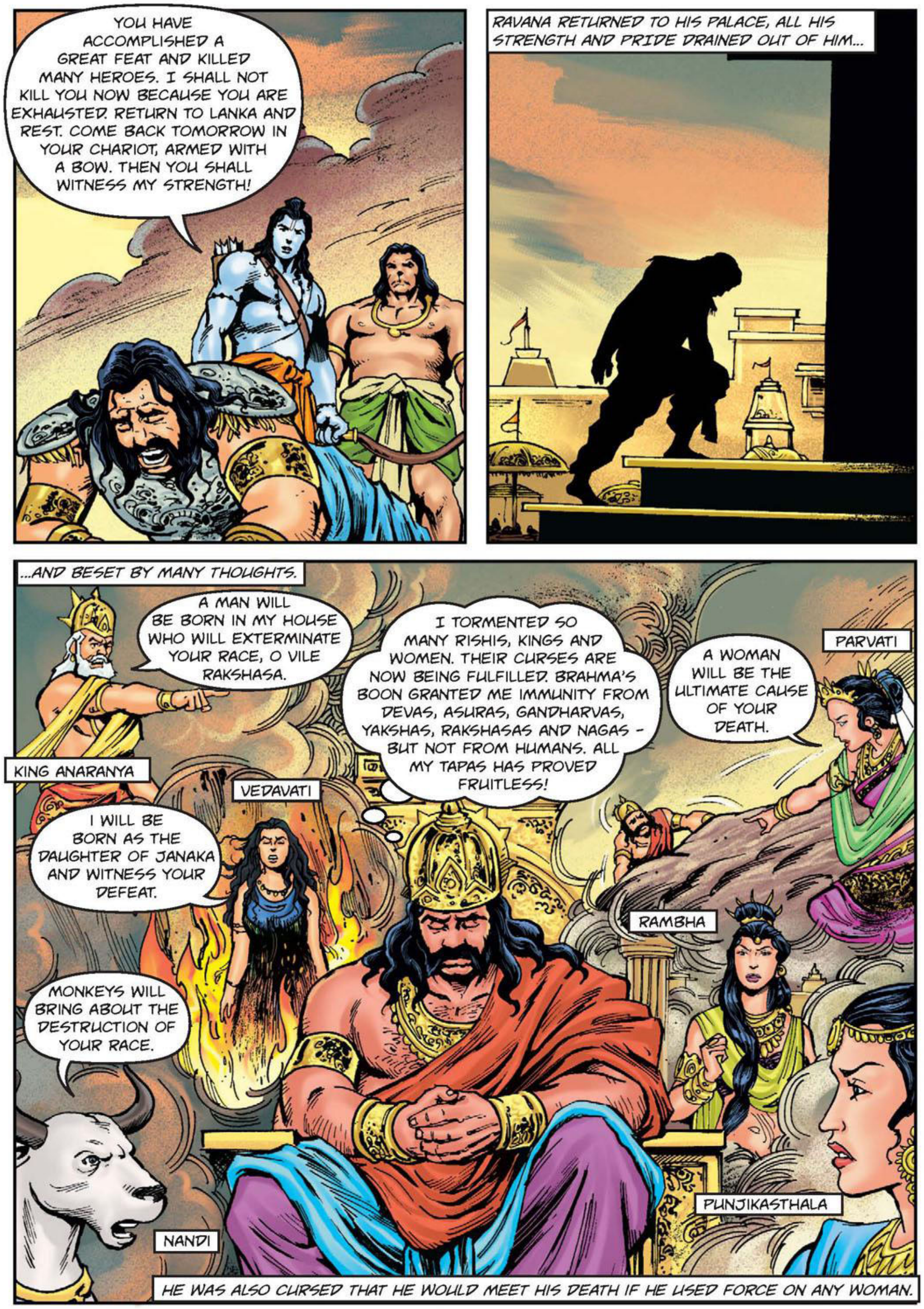

YOU MAY BE AGILE AND CLEVER, BUT THIS AGNEYASTRA* WILL DEPRIVE YOU OF YOUR LIFE... SAVE YOURSELF IF YOU CAN!
BEING THE SON OF AGNI, NILA'S LIFE WAS SPARED.
LAKSHMANA NOW FACED RAVANA.
BEWARE, O KING OF RAKSHASAS! YOU NEED NOT FIGHT THE VANARAS ANY MORE.
LUCKILY YOU HAVE FALLEN WITHIN MY SIGHT! O RAGHAVA WITH A PERVERTED MIND, YOU WILL REACH MRITYULOKAM^ THIS VERY MOMENT!
THERE IS NO NEED TO BOAST. I KNOW YOUR VALOUR, STRENGTH AND PROWESS. I TOO STAND FIRMLY, BOW AND ARROWS IN HAND.
LAKSHMANA DESTROYED RAVANA'S ARROWS TO SHREDS WITH HIS WONDERFUL KSHURA, ARDHACHANDRA, KARNI AND BHALLA ARROWS.
THEN LAKSHMANA, THOUGH STRUCK...
...STRUGGLED UP...
...AND SOON DESTROYED RAVANA'S BOW.

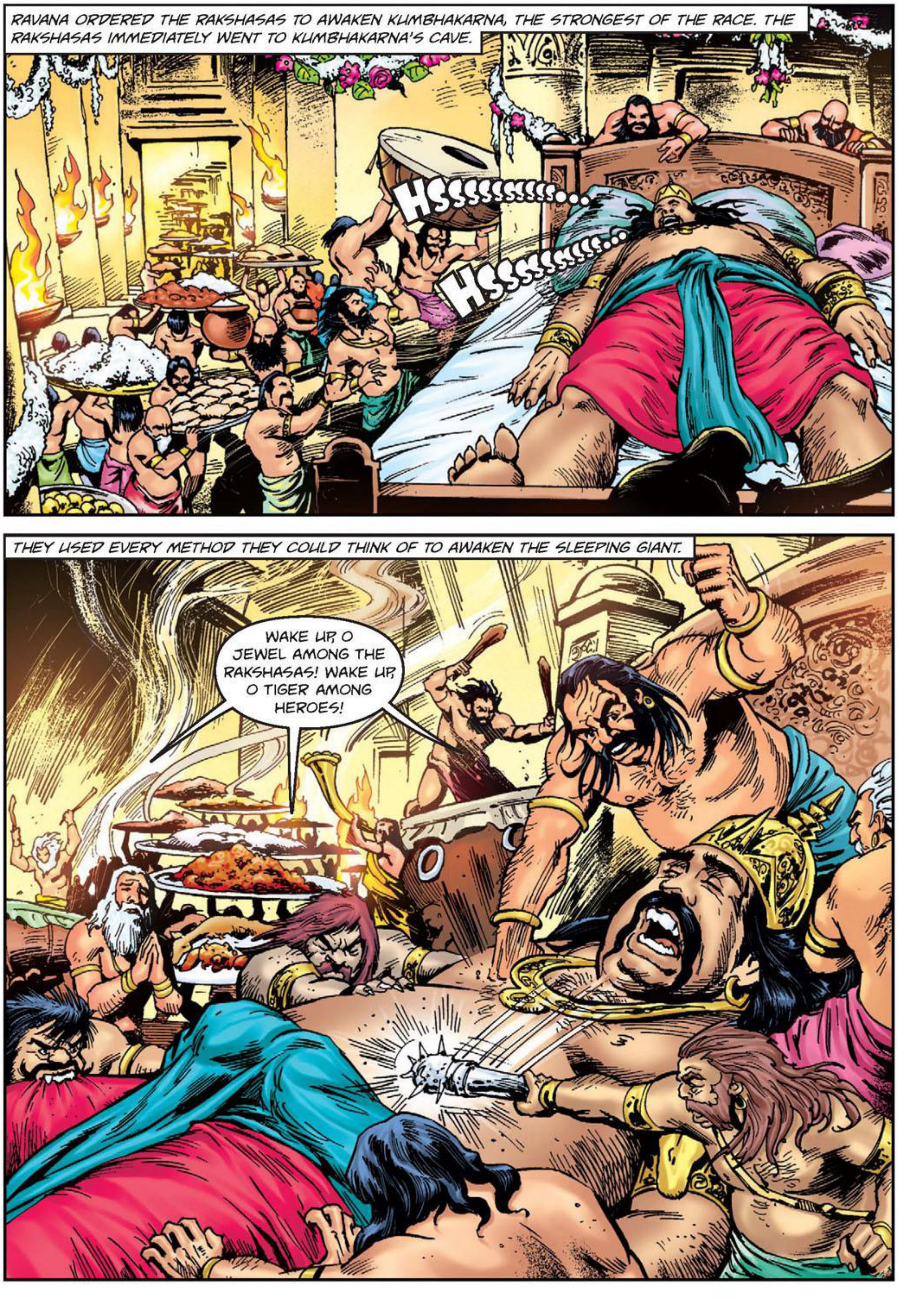
*MYSTIC MISSILE PRESIDED OVER BY AGNI

^THE LAND OF THE DEAD


RAVANA TOOK UP A SPEAR THAT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO HIM BY BRAHMA, AND -
RAVANA COULD LIFT THE THREE WORLDS BUT HE COULD NOT LIFT UP THE INJURED LAKSHMANA.
SEEING LAKSHMANA WOUNDED, HANUMAN WAS FILLED WITH RAGE.
LAKSHMANA, WHO COULD NOT BE LIFTED BY RAVANA, BECAME LIGHT IN THE ARMS OF THE DEVOTED HANUMAN.
RAVANA'S SPEAR LEFT LAKSHMANA AND FLEW BACK TO ITS MASTER.


MEANWHILE, RAMA SAW THAT RAVANA HAD REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.
CLIMB ON MY SHOULDERS, O RAGHAVA, AND YOU SHALL DEFEAT THE RAKSHASA LIKE LORD VISHNU ON GARUDA'S BACK!
STAY, O TIGER AMONG RAKSHASAS! WHERE IN ALL THE WORLDS CAN YOU FIND REFUGE, AFTER GIVING ME SUCH OFFENCE? THAT LAKSHMANA WHOM YOU INJURED WITH YOUR SPEAR SHALL PROVE TO BE THE DEATH OF YOU, YOUR SONS AND GRANDSONS!


YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT FEAT AND KILLED MANY HEROES. I SHALL NOT KILL YOU NOW BECAUSE YOU ARE EXHAUSTED. RETURN TO LANKA AND REST. COME BACK TOMORROW IN YOUR CHARIOT, ARMED WITH A BOW. THEN YOU SHALL WITNESS MY STRENGTH!
RAVANA RETURNED TO HIS PALACE, ALL HIS STRENGTH AND PRIDE DRAINED OUT OF HIM...
...AND BESET BY MANY THOUGHTS.
A MAN WILL BE BORN IN MY HOUSE WHO WILL EXTERMINATE YOUR RACE, O VILE RAKSHASA.
KING ANARANYA
I TORMENTED SO MANY RISHIS, KINGS AND WOMEN. THEIR CURSES ARE NOW BEING FULFILLED. BRAHMA'S BOON GRANTED ME IMMUNITY FROM DEVAS, ASURAS, GANDHARVAS, YAKSHAS, RAKSHASAS AND NAGAS - BUT NOT FROM HUMANS. ALL MY TAPAS HAS PROVED FRUITLESS!
PARVATI
A WOMAN WILL BE THE ULTIMATE CAUSE OF YOUR DEATH.
VEDAVATI
I WILL BE BORN AS THE DAUGHTER OF JANAKA AND WITNESS YOUR DEFEAT.
RAMBHA
MONKEYS WILL BRING ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF YOUR RACE.
PUNJIKASTHALA
NANDI
HE WAS ALSO CURSED THAT HE WOULD MEET HIS DEATH IF HE USED FORCE ON ANY WOMAN.

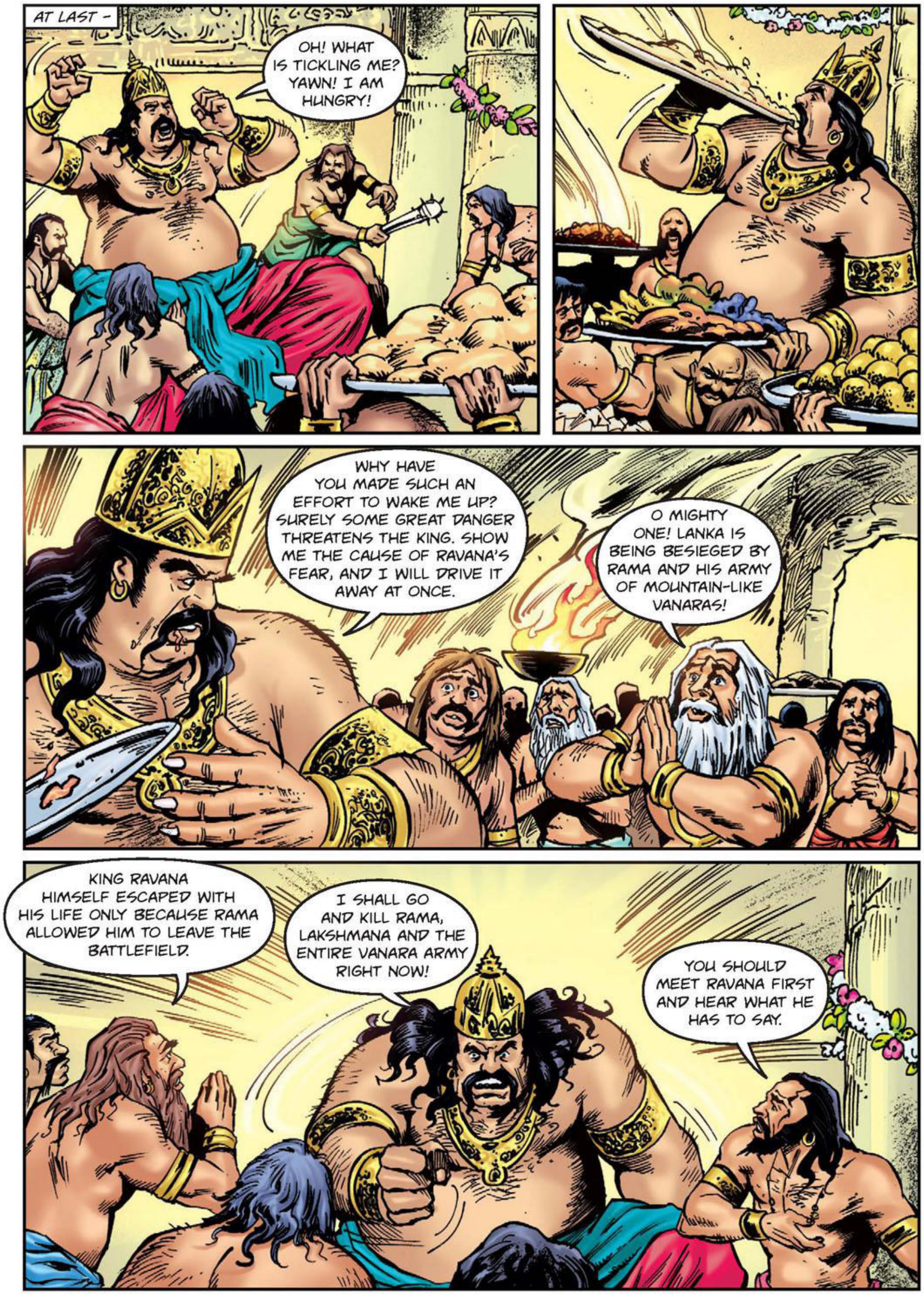


RAVANA ORDERED THE RAKSHASAS TO AWAKEN KUMBHAKARNA, THE STRONGEST OF THE RACE. THE RAKSHASAS IMMEDIATELY WENT TO KUMBHAKARNA'S CAVE.

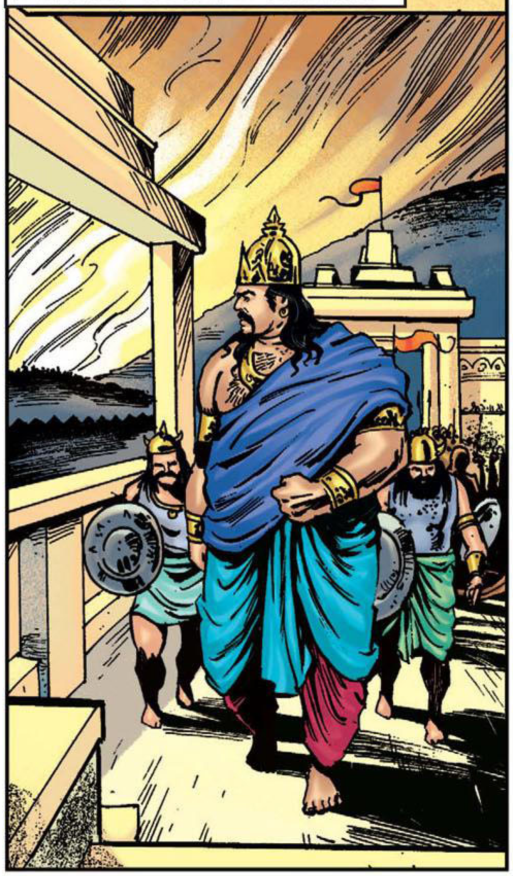
HSSSSSSSSS...
HSSSSSSSSS...

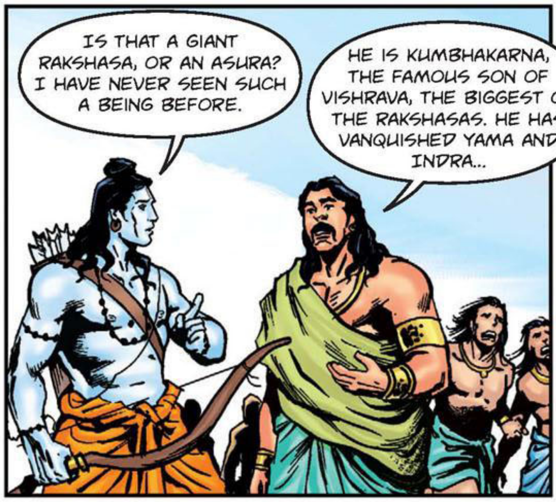
THEY USED EVERY METHOD THEY COULD THINK OF TO AWAKEN THE SLEEPING GIANT.

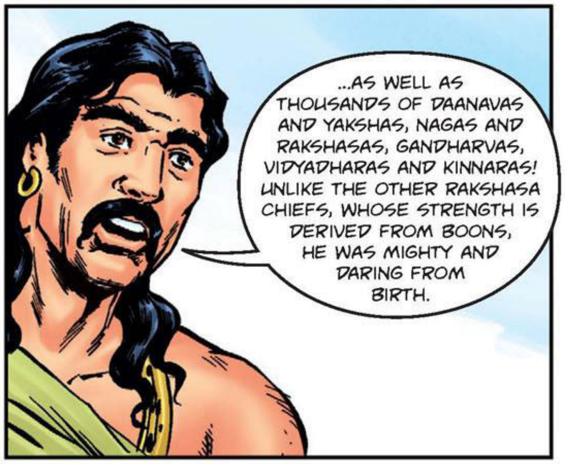
WAKE UP, O JEWEL AMONG THE RAKSHASAS! WAKE UP, O TIGER AMONG HEROES!


AT LAST –
OH! WHAT IS TICKLING ME? YAWN! I AM HUNGRY!
WHY HAVE YOU MADE SUCH AN EFFORT TO WAKE ME UP? SURELY SOME GREAT DANGER THREATENS THE KING. SHOW ME THE CAUSE OF RAVANA'S FEAR, AND I WILL DRIVE IT AWAY AT ONCE.
O MIGHTY ONE! LANKA IS BEING BESIEGED BY RAMA AND HIS ARMY OF MOUNTAIN-LIKE VANARAS!
KING RAVANA HIMSELF ESCAPED WITH HIS LIFE ONLY BECAUSE RAMA ALLOWED HIM TO LEAVE THE BATTLEFIELD.
I SHALL GO AND KILL RAMA, LAKSHMANA AND THE ENTIRE VANARA ARMY RIGHT NOW!
YOU SHOULD MEET RAVANA FIRST AND HEAR WHAT HE HAS TO SAY.

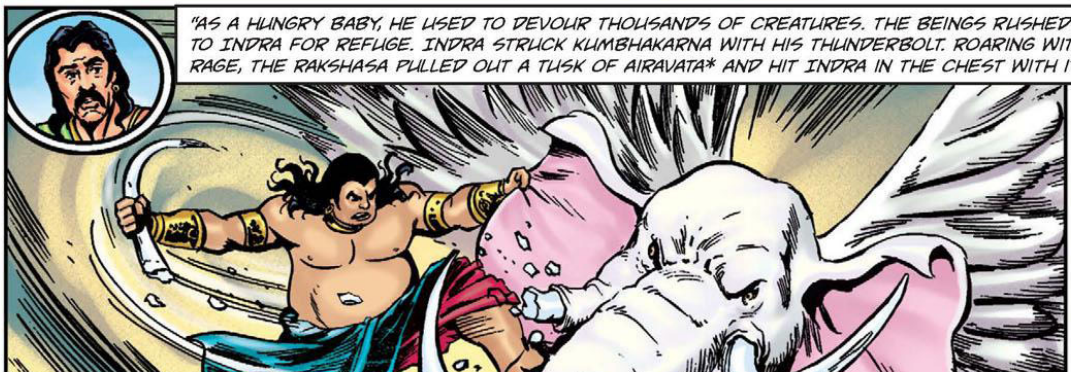
KUMBHAKARNA WASHED HIS FACE, ATE, BATHED AND DRESSED. BY THIS TIME, HE WAS HUNGRY AGAIN. HE ATE AND DRANK SOME MORE, INCLUDING A THOUSAND BUCKETS OF WINE. THEN –




IS THAT A GIANT RAKSHASA, OR AN ASURA? I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A BEING BEFORE.
HE IS KUMBHAKARNA, THE FAMOUS SON OF VISHRAVA, THE BIGGEST OF THE RAKSHASAS. HE HAS VANQUISHED YAMA AND INDRA...


...AS WELL AS THOUSANDS OF DAANAVAS AND YAKSHAS, NAGAS AND RAKSHASAS, GANDHARVAS, VIDYADHARAS AND KINNARAS! UNLIKE THE OTHER RAKSHASA CHIEFS, WHOSE STRENGTH IS DERIVED FROM BOONS, HE WAS MIGHTY AND DARING FROM BIRTH.

"AS A HUNGRY BABY, HE USED TO DEVOUR THOUSANDS OF CREATURES. THE BEINGS RUSHED TO INDRA FOR REFUGE. INDRA STRUCK KUMBHAKARNA WITH HIS THUNDERBOLT. ROARING WITH RAGE, THE RAKSHASA PULLED OUT A TUSK OF AIRAVATA* AND HIT INDRA IN THE CHEST WITH IT.



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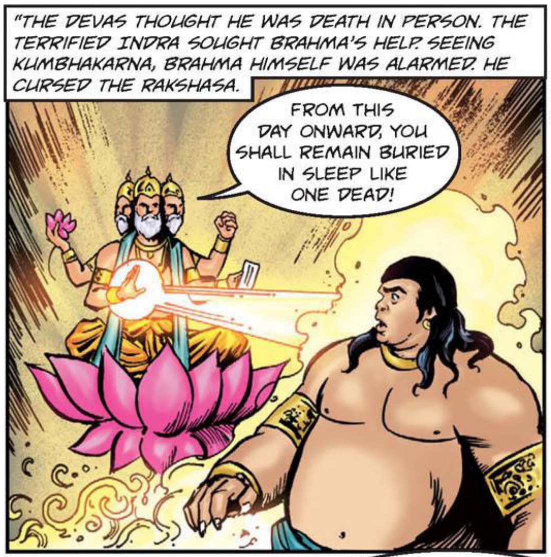
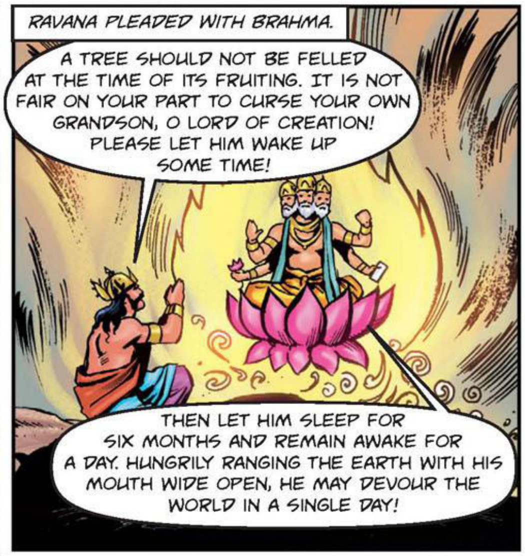
*INDRA'S VAHANA – A WHITE ELEPHANT WITH FOUR TUSKS



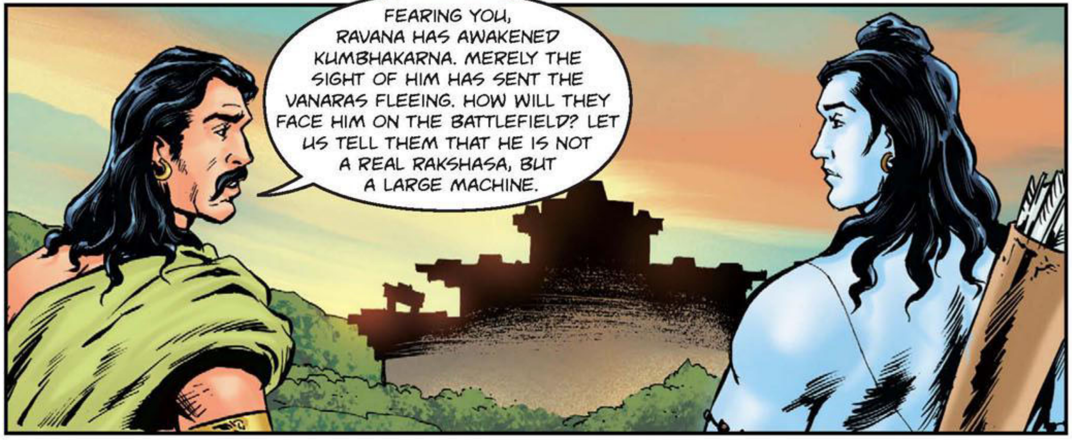
"THE DEVAS THOUGHT HE WAS DEATH IN PERSON. THE TERRIFIED INDRA SOUGHT BRAHMA'S HELP. SEEING KUMBHAKARNA, BRAHMA HIMSELF WAS ALARMED. HE CURSED THE RAKSHASA.

FROM THIS DAY ONWARD, YOU SHALL REMAIN BURIED IN SLEEP LIKE ONE DEAD!

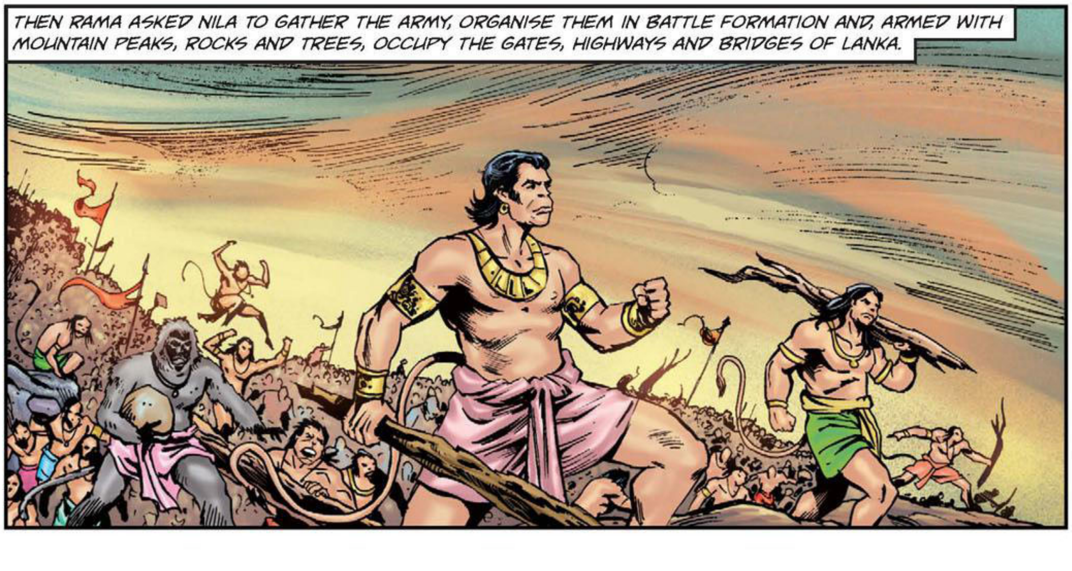


RAVANA PLEADED WITH BRAHMA.

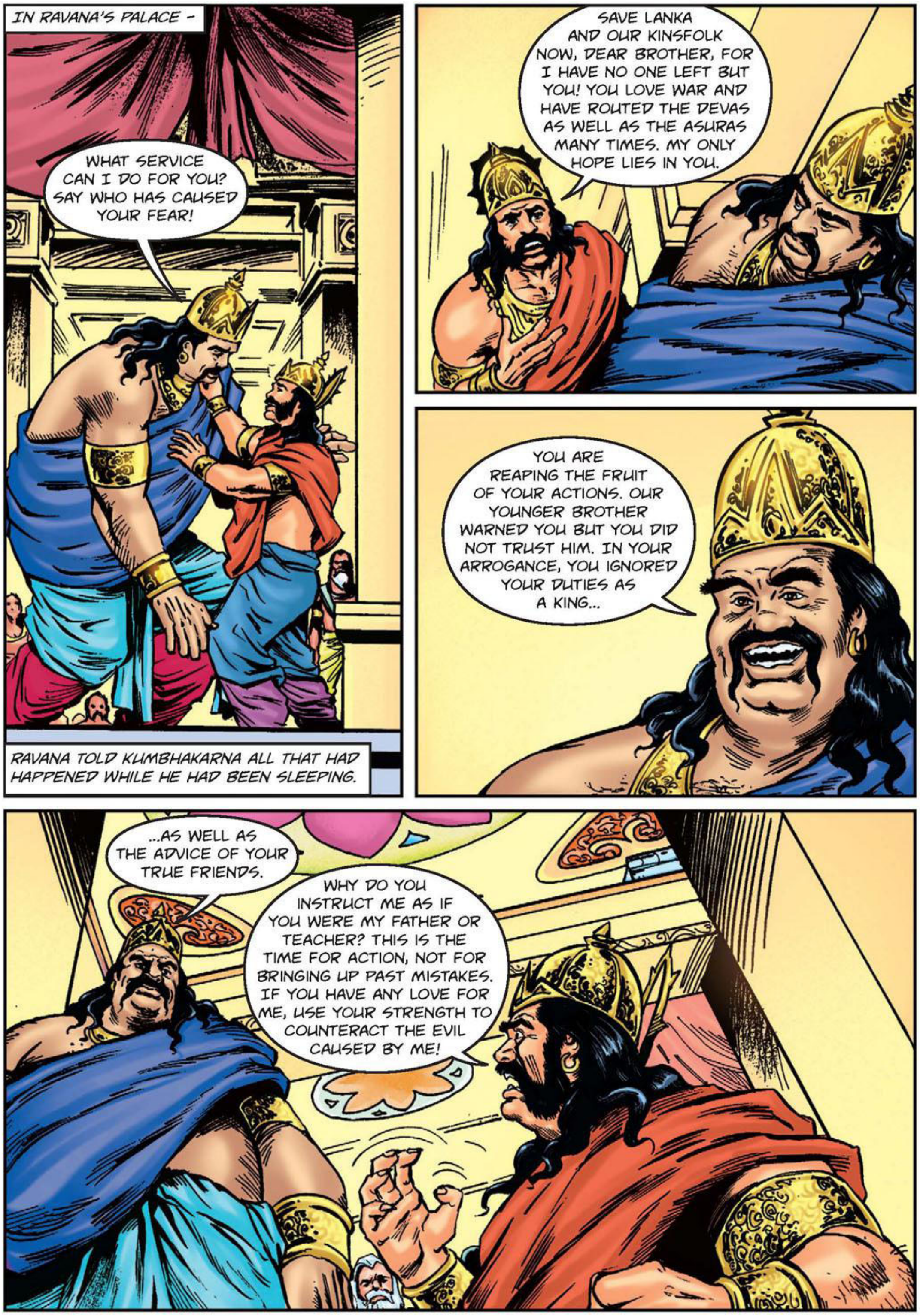
A TREE SHOULD NOT BE FELLED AT THE TIME OF ITS FRUITING. IT IS NOT FAIR ON YOUR PART TO CURSE YOUR OWN GRANDSON, O LORD OF CREATION! PLEASE LET HIM WAKE UP SOME TIME!
THEN LET HIM SLEEP FOR SIX MONTHS AND REMAIN AWAKE FOR A DAY. HUNGRILY RANGING THE EARTH WITH HIS MOUTH WIDE OPEN, HE MAY DEVOUR THE WORLD IN A SINGLE DAY!

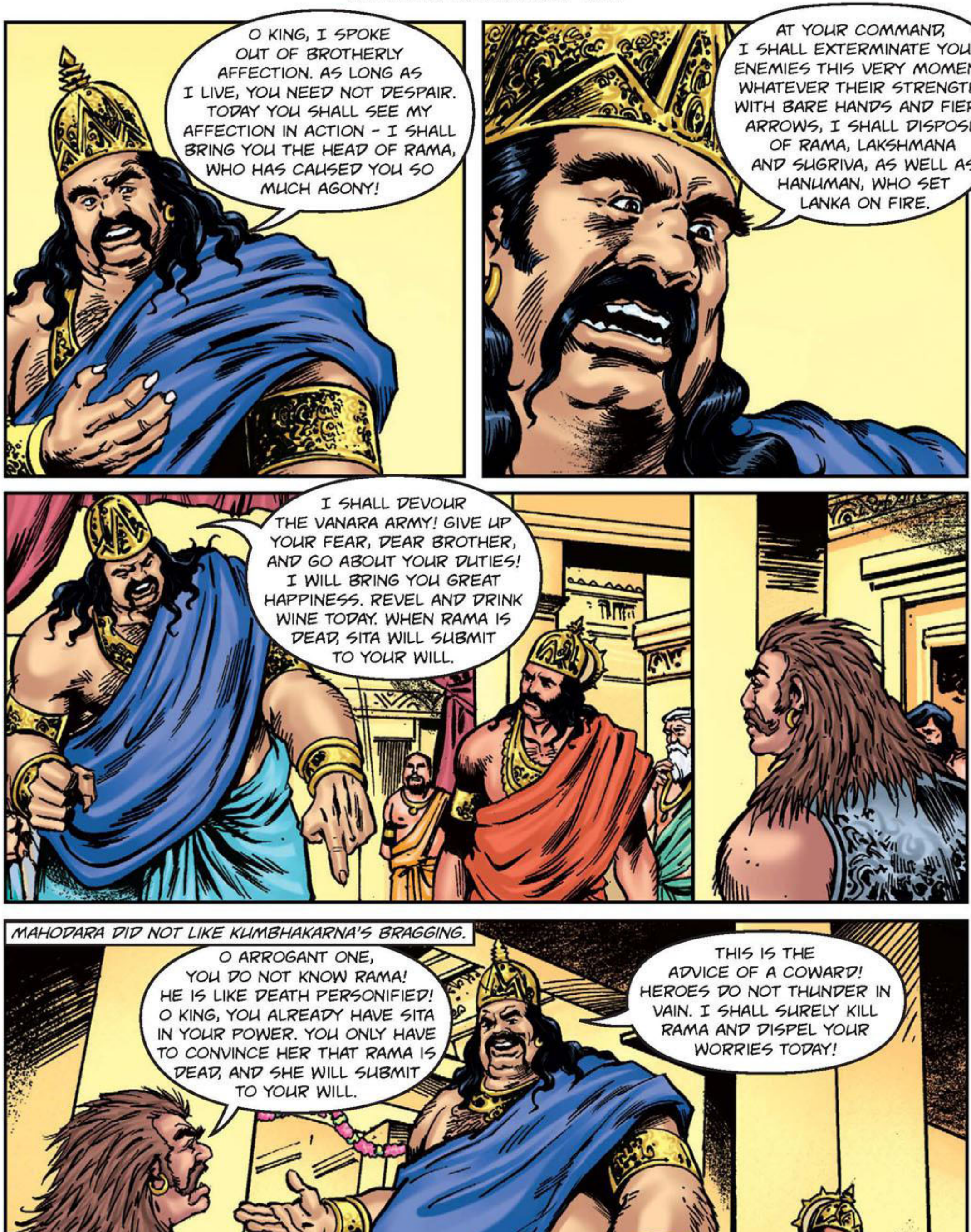


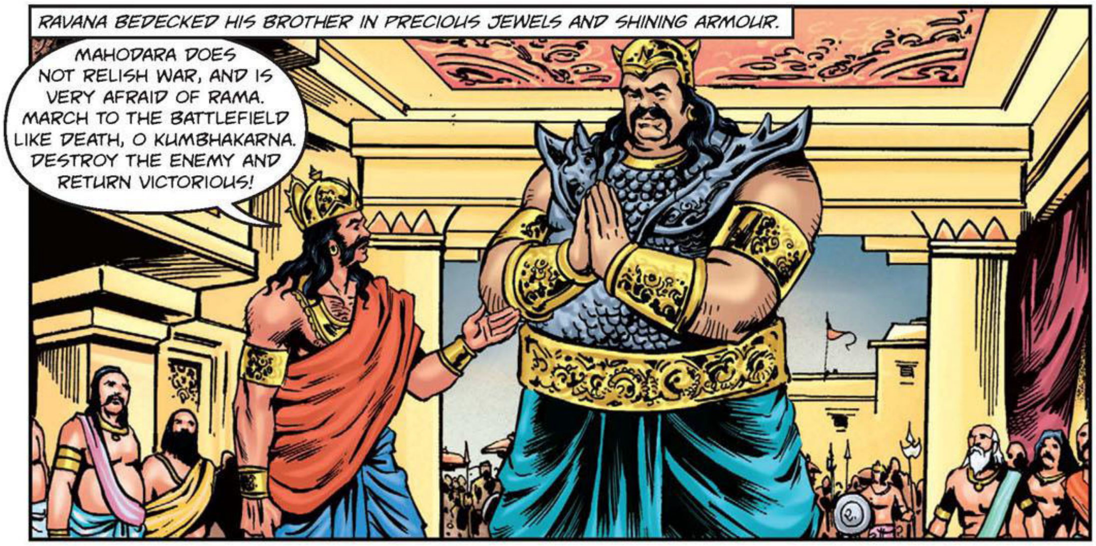
FEARING YOU, RAVANA HAS AWAKENED KUMBHAKARNA. MERELY THE SIGHT OF HIM HAS SENT THE VANARAS FLEEING. HOW WILL THEY FACE HIM ON THE BATTLEFIELD? LET US TELL THEM THAT HE IS NOT A REAL RAKSHASA, BUT A LARGE MACHINE.



THEN RAMA ASKED NILA TO GATHER THE ARMY, ORGANISE THEM IN BATTLE FORMATION AND, ARMED WITH MOUNTAIN PEAKS, ROCKS AND TREES, OCCUPY THE GATES, HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES OF LANKA.

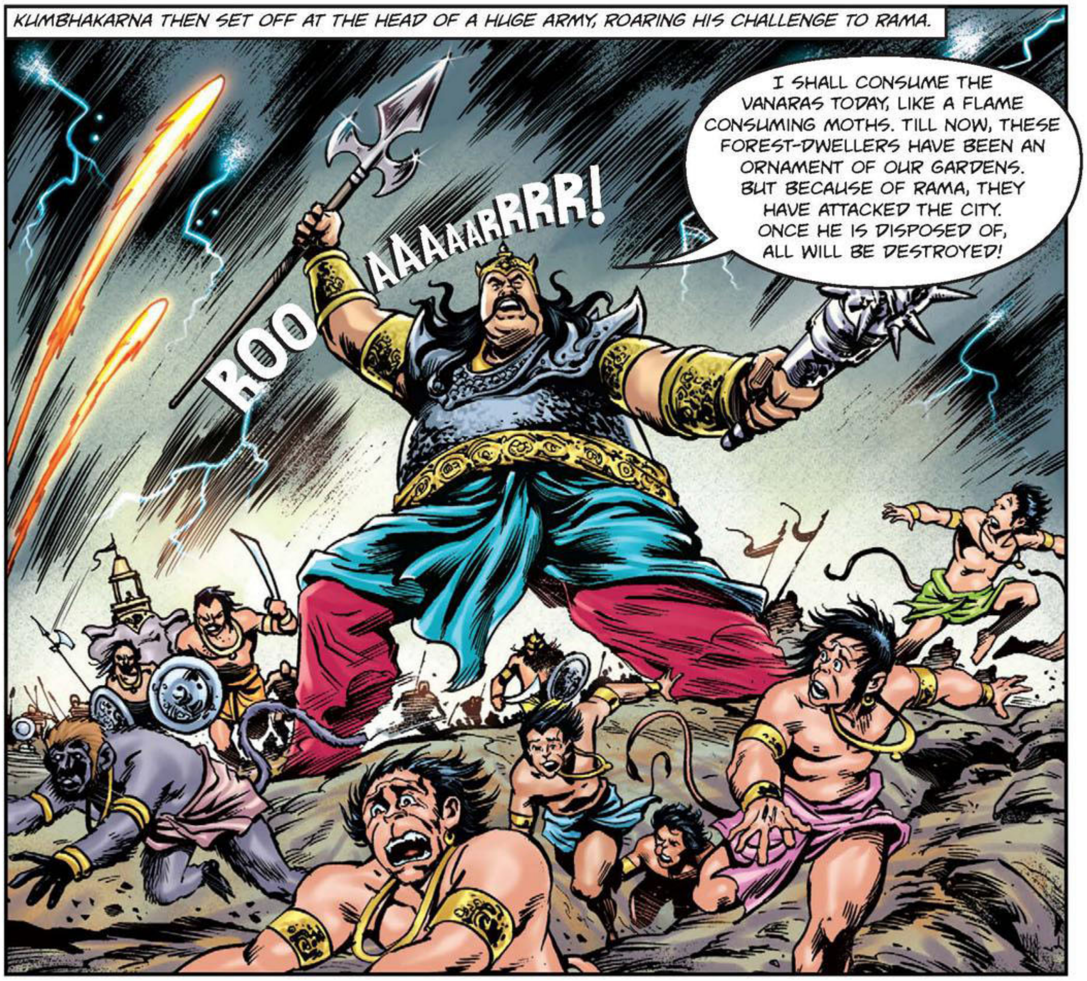

IN RAVANA'S PALACE -
WHAT SERVICE CAN I DO FOR YOU? SAY WHO HAS CAUSED YOUR FEAR!
RAVANA TOLD KUMBHAKARNA ALL THAT HAD HAPPENED WHILE HE HAD BEEN SLEEPING.
SAVE LANKA AND OUR KINSFOLK NOW, DEAR BROTHER, FOR I HAVE NO ONE LEFT BUT YOU! YOU LOVE WAR AND HAVE ROUTED THE DEVAS AS WELL AS THE ASURAS MANY TIMES. MY ONLY HOPE LIES IN YOU.
YOU ARE REAPING THE FRUIT OF YOUR ACTIONS. OUR YOUNGER BROTHER WARNED YOU BUT YOU DID NOT TRUST HIM. IN YOUR ARROGANCE, YOU IGNORED YOUR DUTIES AS A KING...
...AS WELL AS THE ADVICE OF YOUR TRUE FRIENDS.
WHY DO YOU INSTRUCT ME AS IF YOU WERE MY FATHER OR TEACHER? THIS IS THE TIME FOR ACTION, NOT FOR BRINGING UP PAST MISTAKES. IF YOU HAVE ANY LOVE FOR ME, USE YOUR STRENGTH TO COUNTERACT THE EVIL CAUSED BY ME!


O KING, I SPOKE OUT OF BROTHERLY AFFECTION. AS LONG AS I LIVE, YOU NEED NOT DESPAIR. TODAY YOU SHALL SEE MY AFFECTION IN ACTION - I SHALL BRING YOU THE HEAD OF RAMA, WHO HAS CAUSED YOU SO MUCH AGONY!
AT YOUR COMMAND, I SHALL EXTERMINATE YOUR ENEMIES THIS VERY MOMENT, WHATEVER THEIR STRENGTH! WITH BARE HANDS AND FIERY ARROWS, I SHALL DISPOSE OF RAMA, LAKSHMANA AND SUGRIVA, AS WELL AS HANUMAN, WHO SET LANKA ON FIRE.
I SHALL DEVOUR THE VANARA ARMY! GIVE UP YOUR FEAR, DEAR BROTHER, AND GO ABOUT YOUR DUTIES! I WILL BRING YOU GREAT HAPPINESS. REVEL AND DRINK WINE TODAY. WHEN RAMA IS DEAD, SITA WILL SUBMIT TO YOUR WILL.
MAHODARA DID NOT LIKE KUMBHAKARNA'S BRAGGING.
O ARROGANT ONE, YOU DO NOT KNOW RAMA! HE IS LIKE DEATH PERSONIFIED! O KING, YOU ALREADY HAVE SITA IN YOUR POWER. YOU ONLY HAVE TO CONVINCE HER THAT RAMA IS DEAD, AND SHE WILL SUBMIT TO YOUR WILL.
THIS IS THE ADVICE OF A COWARD! HEROES DO NOT THUNDER IN VAIN. I SHALL SURELY KILL RAMA AND DISPEL YOUR WORRIES TODAY!



RAVANA BEDECKED HIS BROTHER IN PRECIOUS JEWELS AND SHINING ARMOUR.

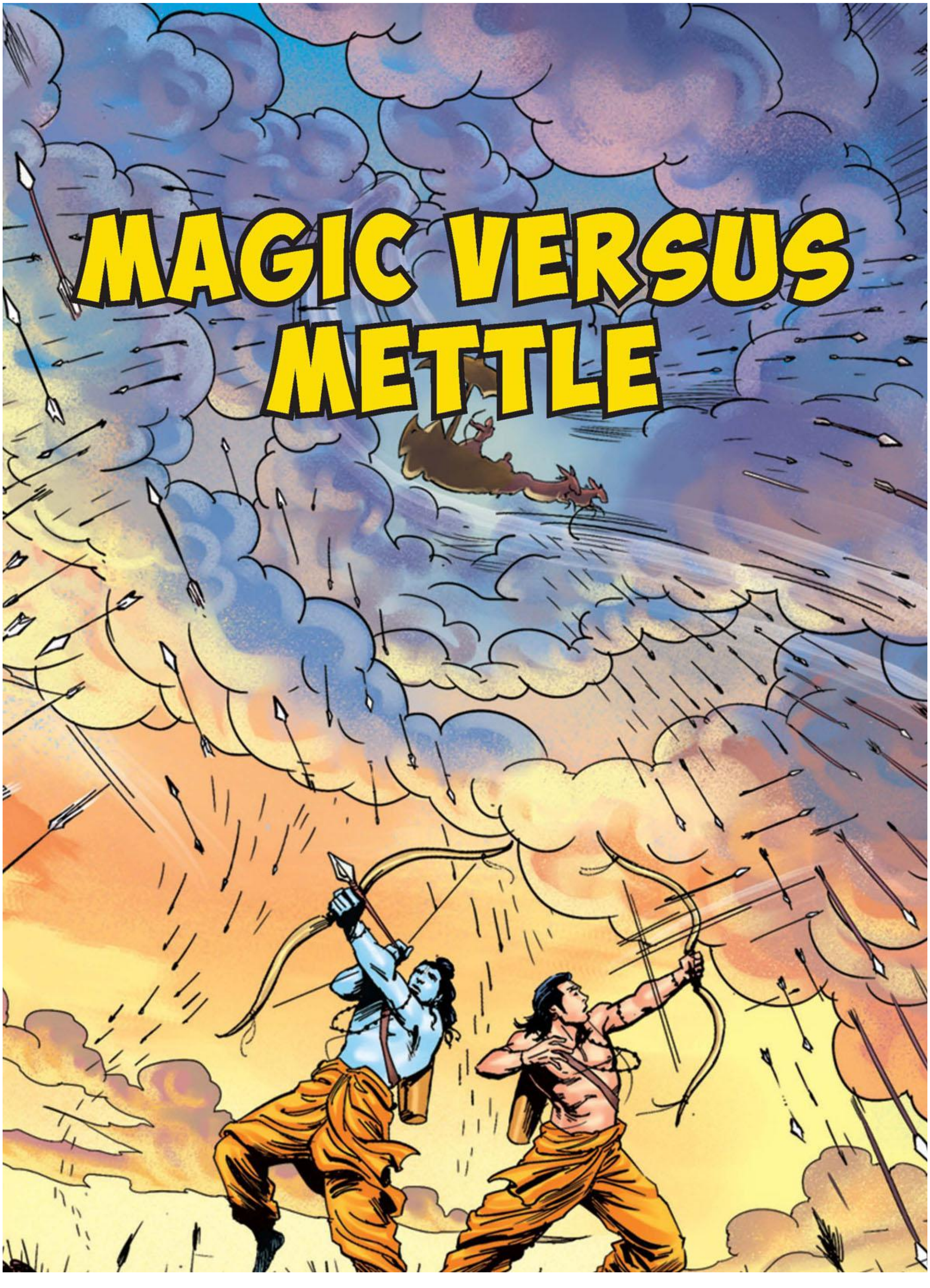
MAHODARA DOES NOT RELISH WAR, AND IS VERY AFRAID OF RAMA. MARCH TO THE BATTLEFIELD LIKE DEATH, O KUMBHAKARNA. DESTROY THE ENEMY AND RETURN VICTORIOUS!



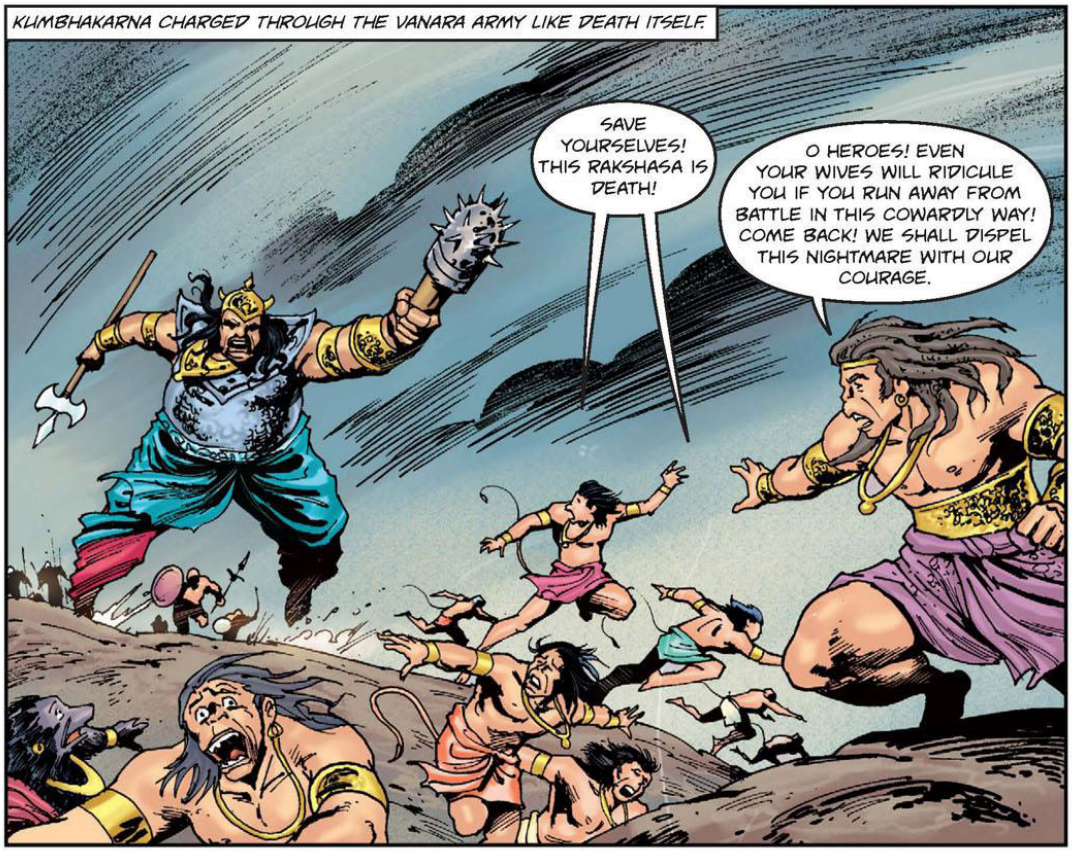
KUMBHAKARNA THEN SET OFF AT THE HEAD OF A HUGE ARMY, ROARING HIS CHALLENGE TO RAMA.

I SHALL CONSUME THE VANARAS TODAY, LIKE A FLAME CONSUMING MOTHS. TILL NOW, THESE FOREST-DWELLERS HAVE BEEN AN ORNAMENT OF OUR GARDENS. BUT BECAUSE OF RAMA, THEY HAVE ATTACKED THE CITY. ONCE HE IS DISPOSED OF, ALL WILL BE DESTROYED!
ROOAAAAARRRR!

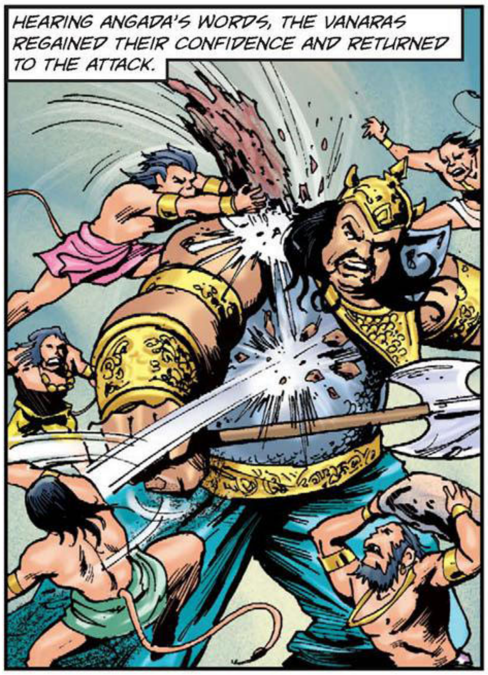
MAGIC VERSUS METTLE



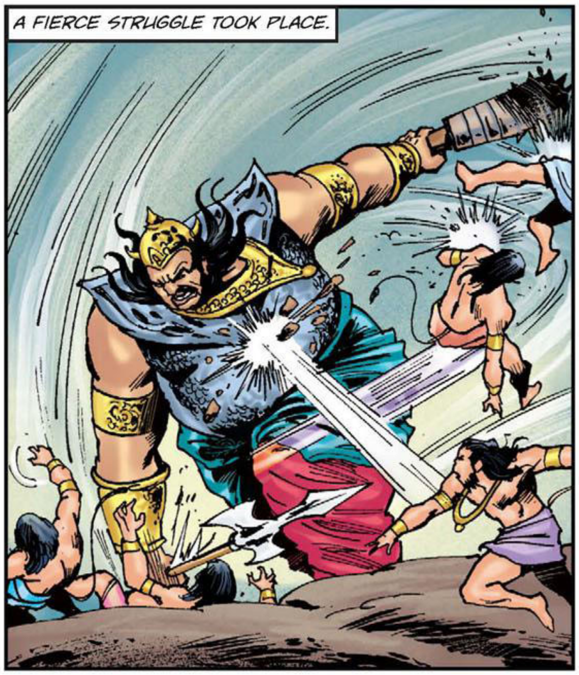
KUMBHAKARNA CHARGED THROUGH THE VANARA ARMY LIKE DEATH ITSELF.

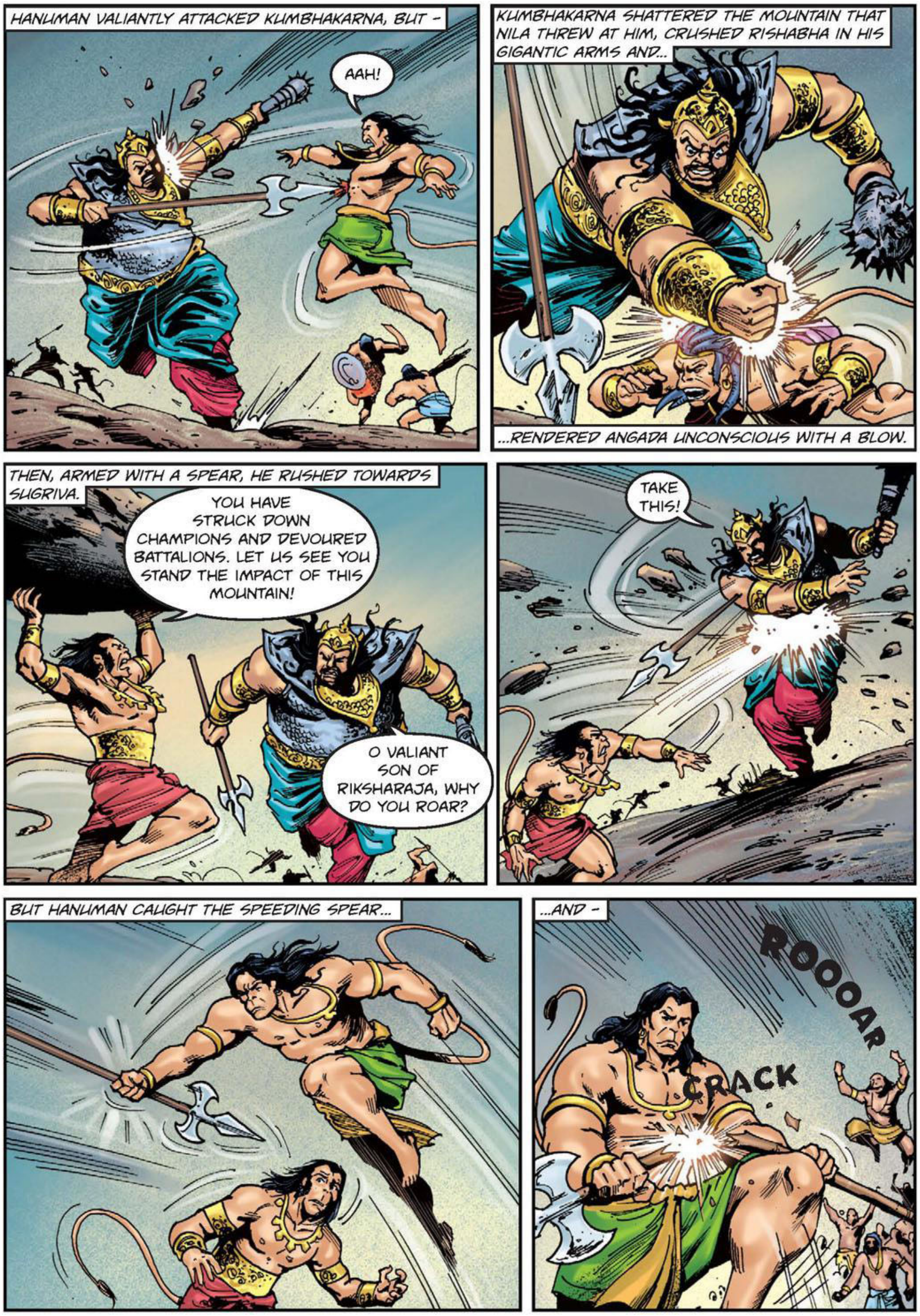

SAVE YOURSELVES! THIS RAKSHASA IS DEATH!
O HEROES! EVEN YOUR WIVES WILL RIDICULE YOU IF YOU RUN AWAY FROM BATTLE IN THIS COWARDLY WAY! COME BACK! WE SHALL DISPEL THIS NIGHTMARE WITH OUR COURAGE.

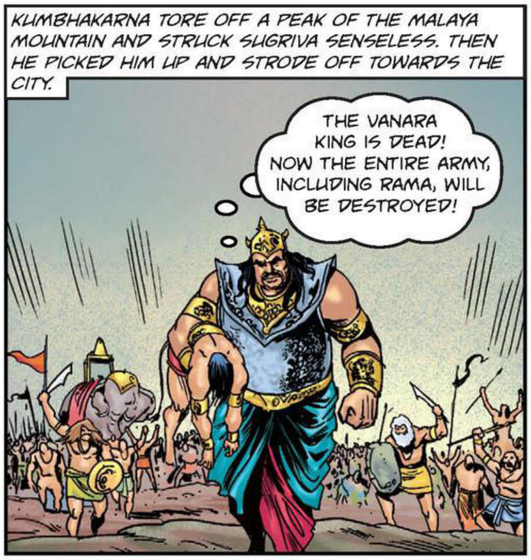
HEARING ANGADA'S WORDS, THE VANARAS REGAINED THEIR CONFIDENCE AND RETURNED TO THE ATTACK.

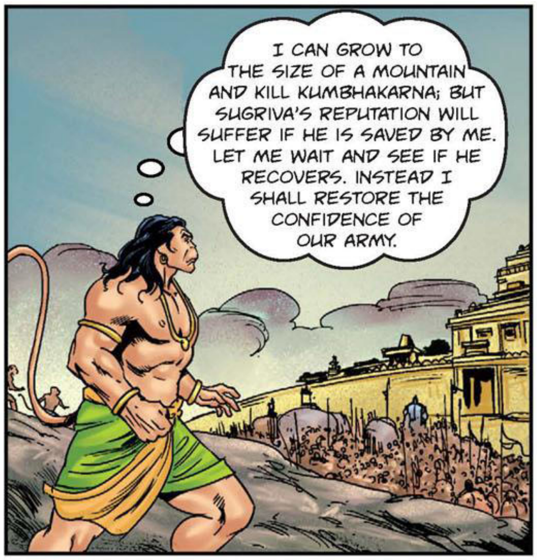


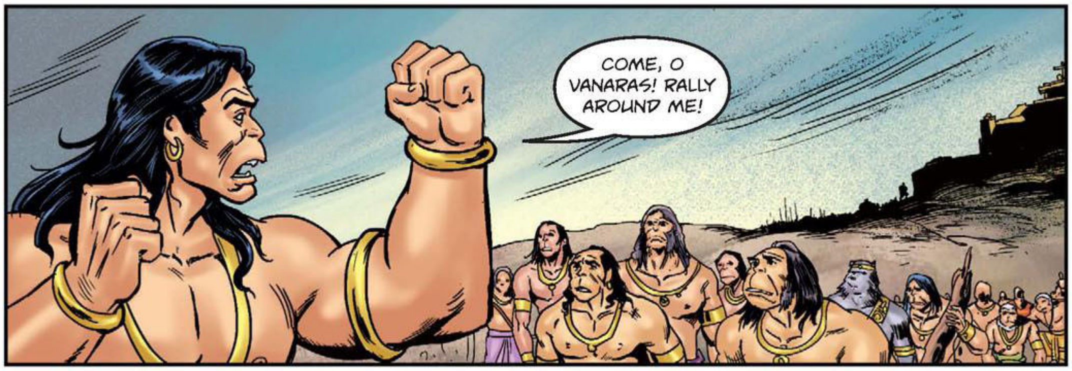
A FIERCE STRUGGLE TOOK PLACE.

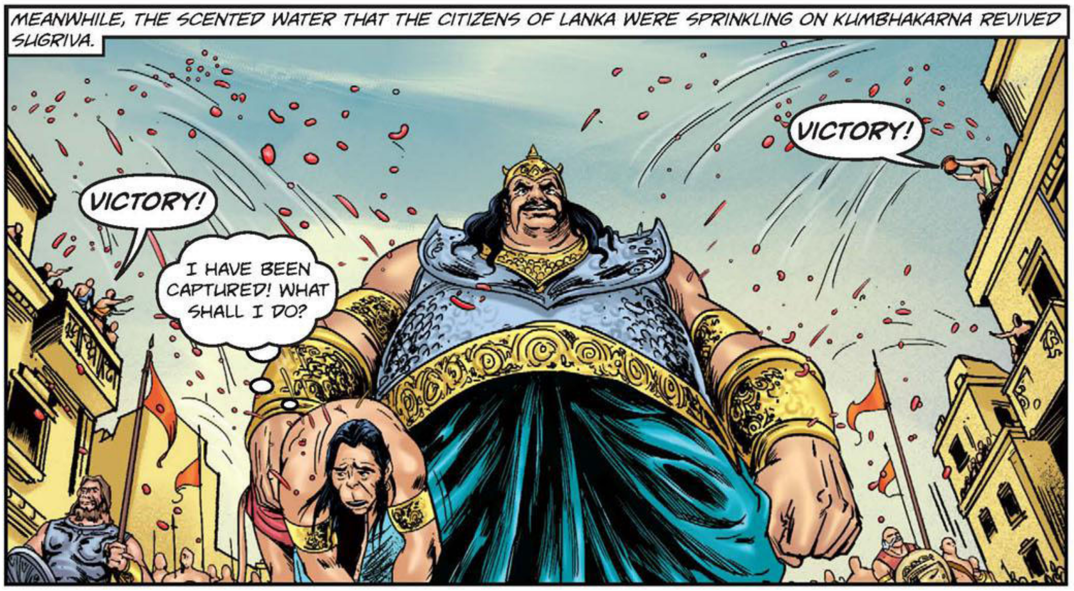


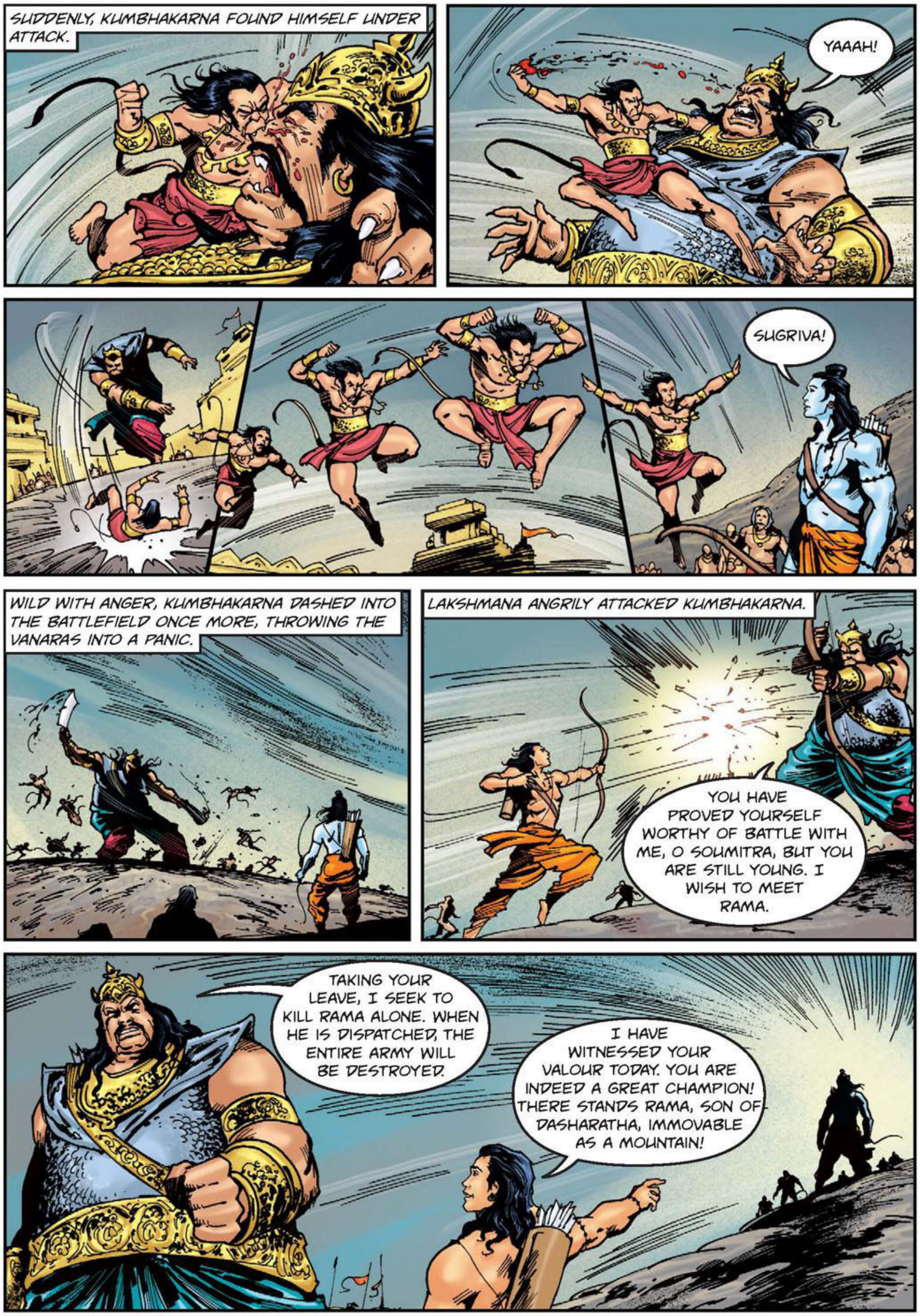

HANUMAN VALIANTLY ATTACKED KUMBHAKARNA, BUT -
AAH!
KUMBHAKARNA SHATTERED THE MOUNTAIN THAT NILA THREW AT HIM, CRUSHED RISHABHA IN HIS GIGANTIC ARMS AND...
...RENDERED ANGADA UNCONSCIOUS WITH A BLOW.
THEN, ARMED WITH A SPEAR, HE RUSHED TOWARDS SUGRIVA.
YOU HAVE STRUCK DOWN CHAMPIONS AND DEVOURED BATTALIONS. LET US SEE YOU STAND THE IMPACT OF THIS MOUNTAIN!
O VALIANT SON OF RIKSHARAJA, WHY DO YOU ROAR?
TAKE THIS!
BUT HANUMAN CAUGHT THE SPEEDING SPEAR...
...AND -
ROOOOAR
CRACK

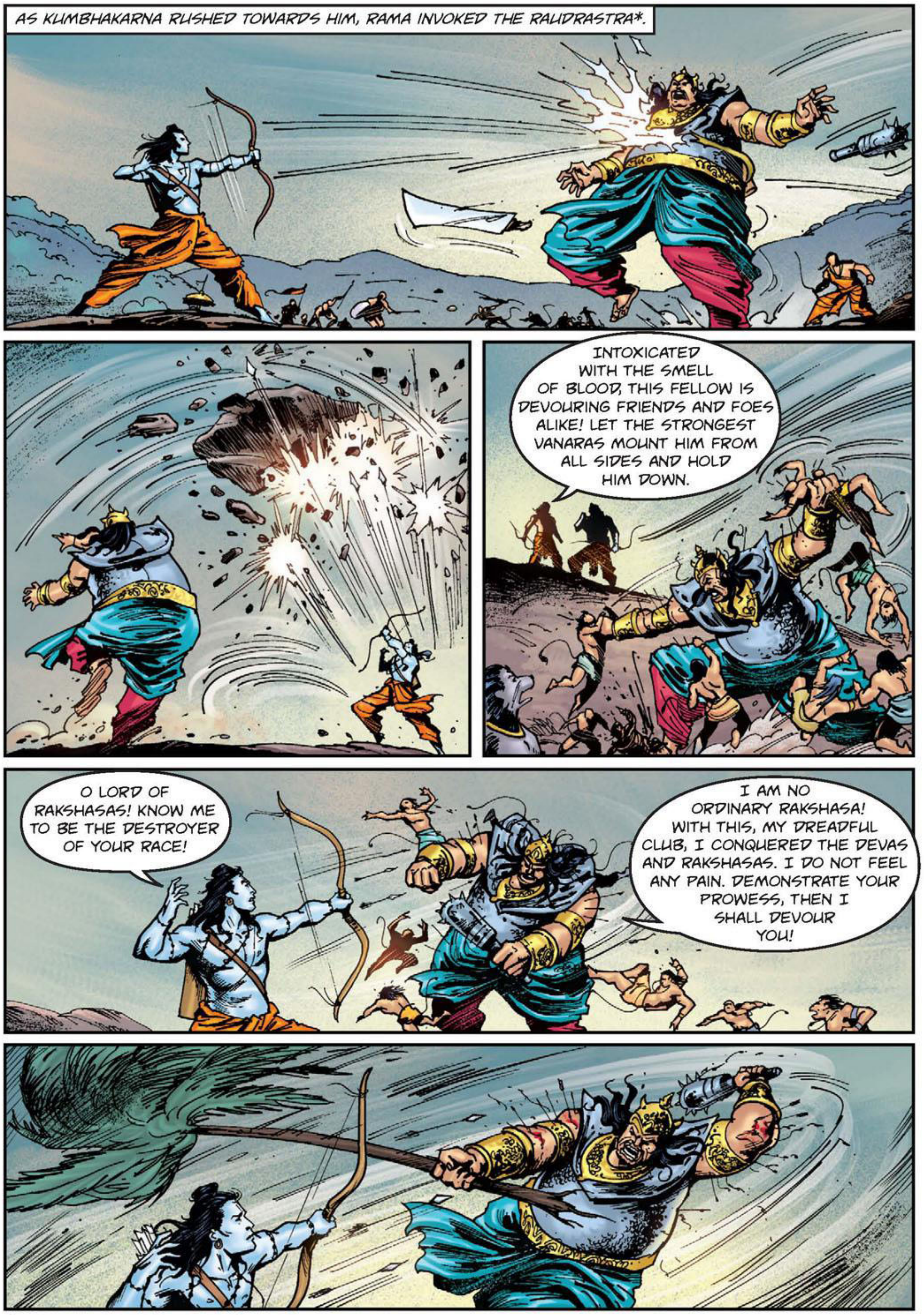

KUMBHAKARNA TORE OFF A PEAK OF THE MALAYA MOUNTAIN AND STRUCK SUGRIVA SENSELESS. THEN HE PICKED HIM UP AND STRODE OFF TOWARDS THE CITY.
THE VANARA KING IS DEAD! NOW THE ENTIRE ARMY, INCLUDING RAMA, WILL BE DESTROYED!


I CAN GROW TO THE SIZE OF A MOUNTAIN AND KILL KUMBHAKARNA; BUT SUGRIVA'S REPUTATION WILL SUFFER IF HE IS SAVED BY ME. LET ME WAIT AND SEE IF HE RECOVERS. INSTEAD I SHALL RESTORE THE CONFIDENCE OF OUR ARMY.


COME, O VANARAS! RALLY AROUND ME!


MEANWHILE, THE SCENTED WATER THAT THE CITIZENS OF LANKA WERE SPRINKLING ON KUMBHAKARNA REVIVED SUGRIVA.
VICTORY!
VICTORY!
I HAVE BEEN CAPTURED! WHAT SHALL I DO?

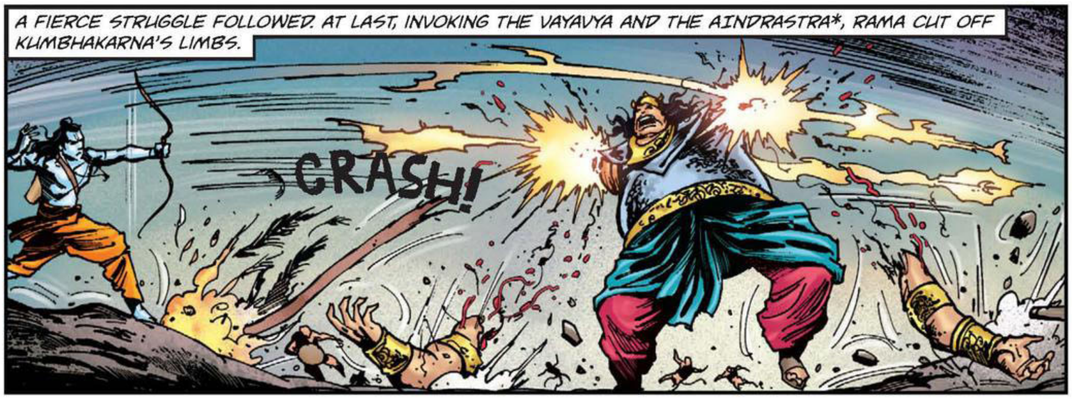

SUDDENLY, KUMBHAKARNA FOUND HIMSELF UNDER ATTACK.
YAAAH!
SUGRIVA!
WILD WITH ANGER, KUMBHAKARNA DASHED INTO THE BATTLEFIELD ONCE MORE, THROWING THE VANARAS INTO A PANIC.
LAKSHMANA ANGRILY ATTACKED KUMBHAKARNA.
YOU HAVE PROVED YOURSELF WORTHY OF BATTLE WITH ME, O SOUMITRA, BUT YOU ARE STILL YOUNG. I WISH TO MEET RAMA.
TAKING YOUR LEAVE, I SEEK TO KILL RAMA ALONE. WHEN HE IS DISPATCHED, THE ENTIRE ARMY WILL BE DESTROYED.
I HAVE WITNESSED YOUR VALOUR TODAY. YOU ARE INDEED A GREAT CHAMPION! THERE STANDS RAMA, SON OF DASHARATHA, IMMOVABLE AS A MOUNTAIN!


AS KUMBHAKARNA RUSHED TOWARDS HIM, RAMA INVOKED THE RAUDRASTRA*.
INTOXICATED WITH THE SMELL OF BLOOD, THIS FELLOW IS DEVOURING FRIENDS AND FOES ALIKE! LET THE STRONGEST VANARAS MOUNT HIM FROM ALL SIDES AND HOLD HIM DOWN.
O LORD OF RAKSHASAS! KNOW ME TO BE THE DESTROYER OF YOUR RACE!
I AM NO ORDINARY RAKSHASA! WITH THIS, MY DREADFUL CLUB, I CONQUERED THE DEVAS AND RAKSHASAS. I DO NOT FEEL ANY PAIN. DEMONSTRATE YOUR PROWESS, THEN I SHALL DEVOUR YOU!

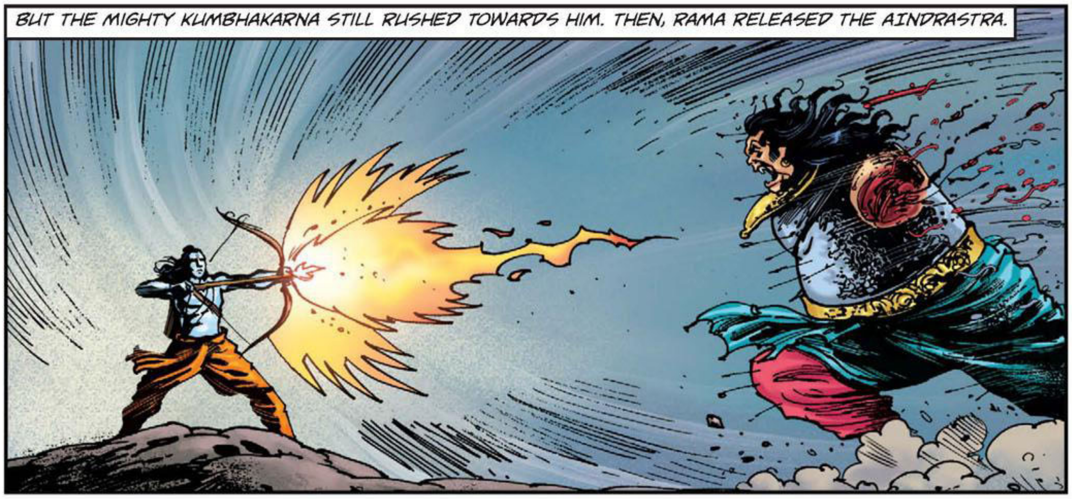
---

*MISSILE PRESIDED OVER BY RUDRA

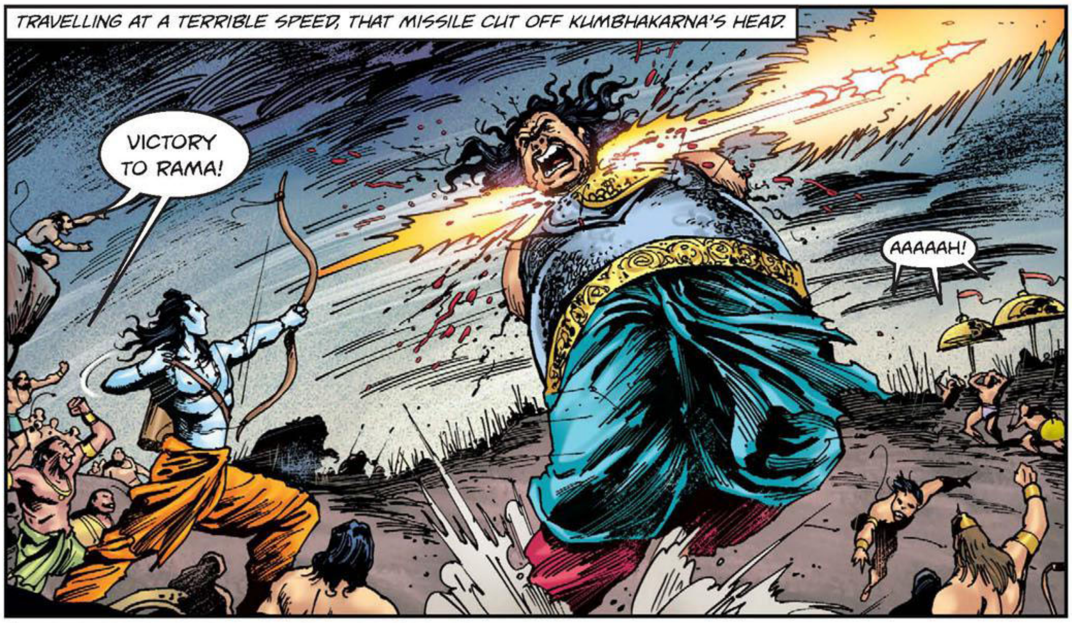
A FIERCE STRUGGLE FOLLOWED. AT LAST, INVOKING THE VAYAVYA AND THE AINDRASTRA*, RAMA CUT OFF KUMBHAKARNA'S LIMBS.



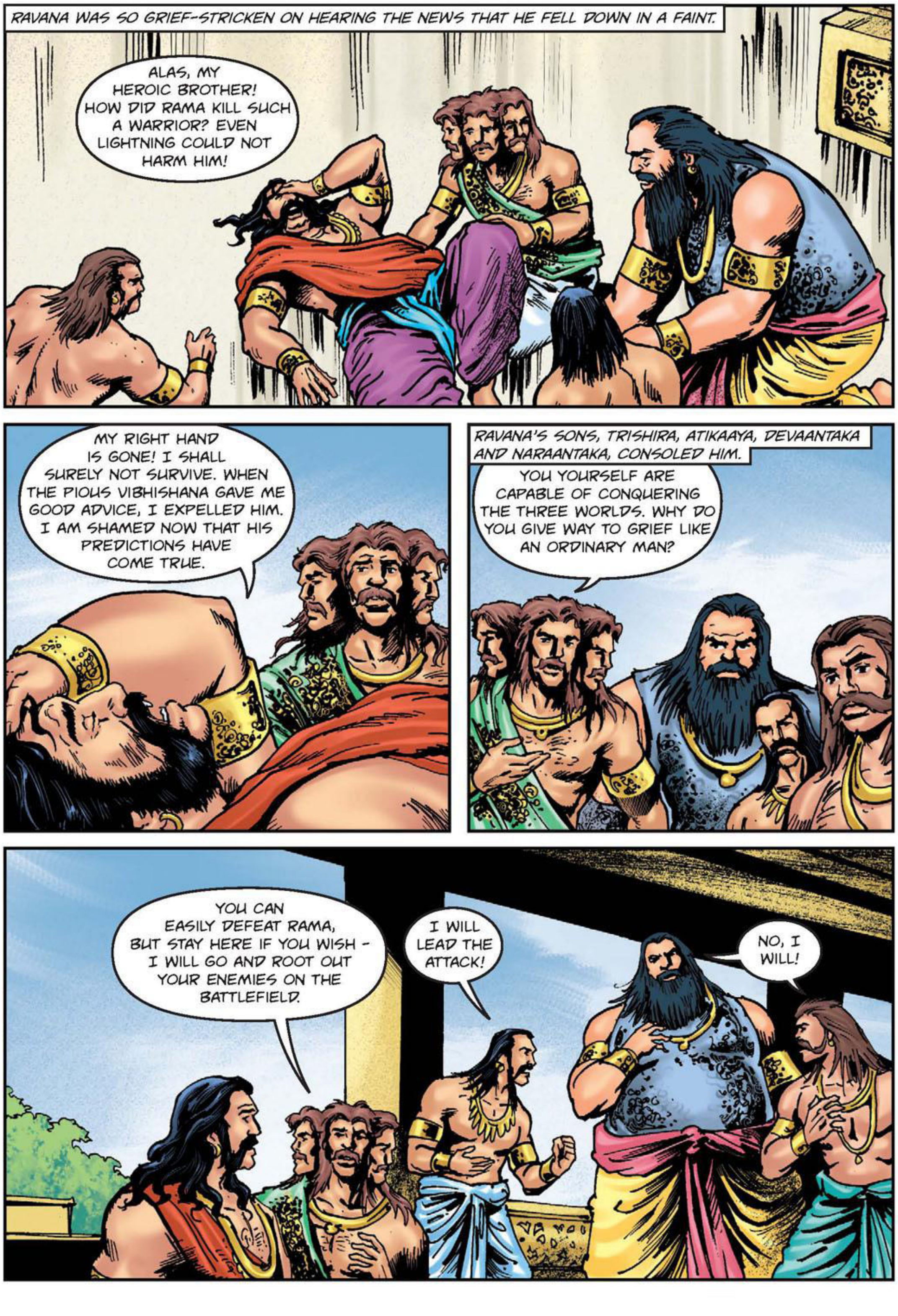
BUT THE MIGHTY KUMBHAKARNA STILL RUSHED TOWARDS HIM. THEN, RAMA RELEASED THE AINDRASTRA.

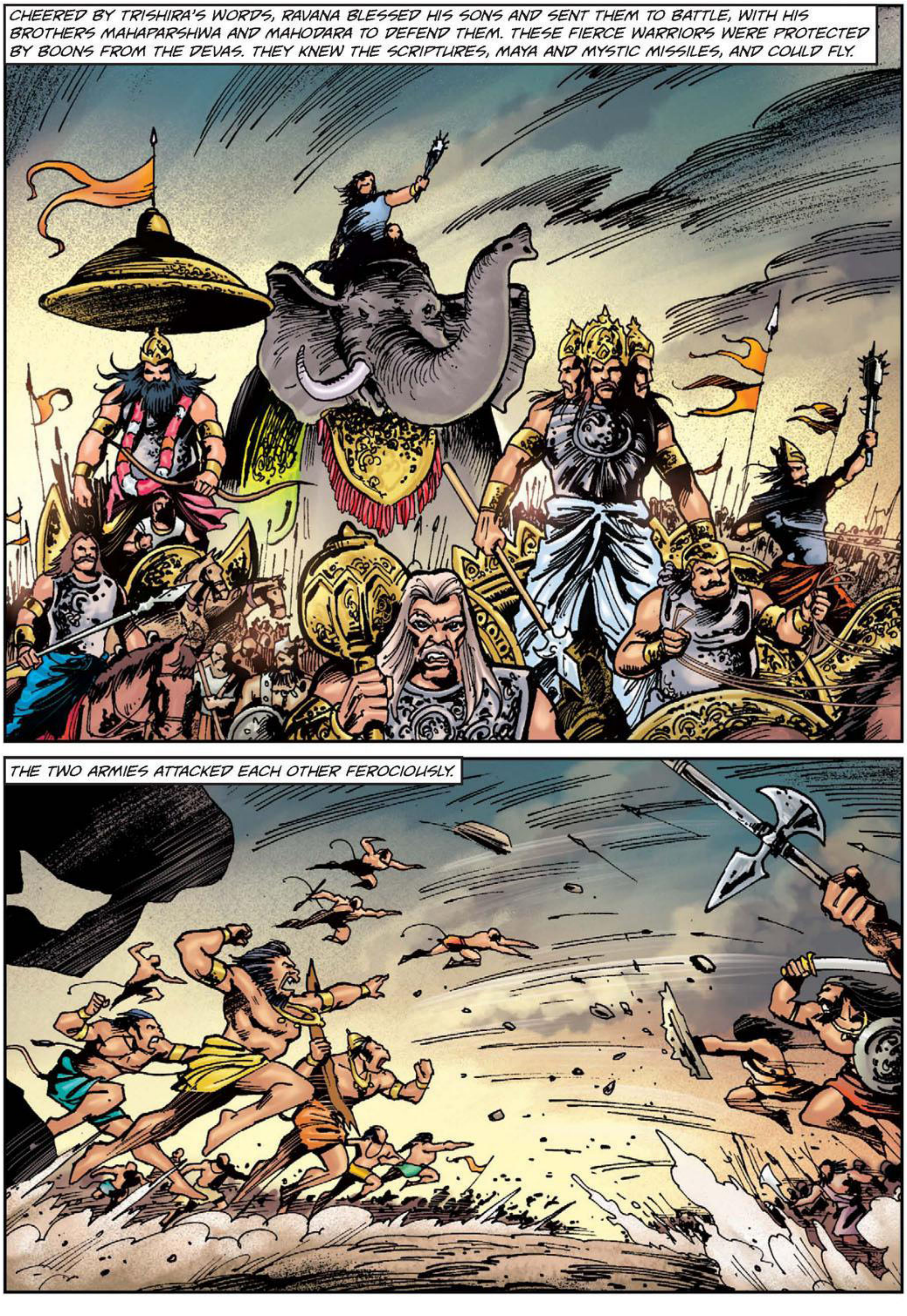


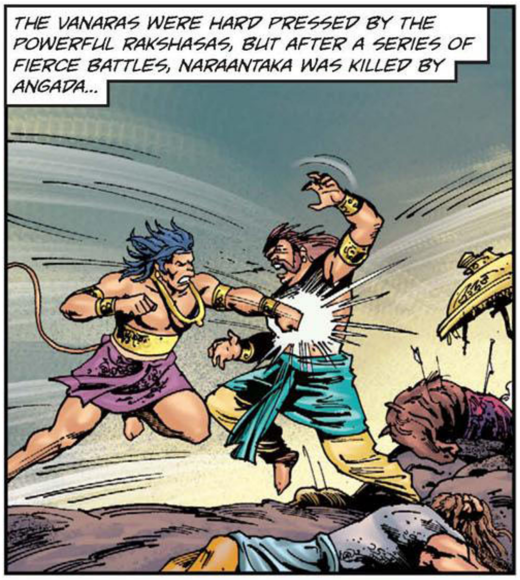
TRAVELLING AT A TERRIBLE SPEED, THAT MISSILE CUT OFF KUMBHAKARNA'S HEAD.


VICTORY TO RAMA!
AAAAAH!

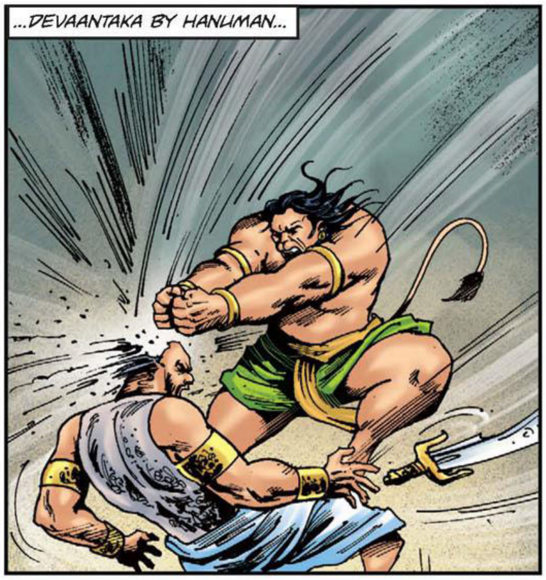
*MISSILES PRESIDED OVER BY VAYU AND INDRA


RAVANA WAS SO GRIEF-STRICKEN ON HEARING THE NEWS THAT HE FELL DOWN IN A FAINT.
ALAS, MY HEROIC BROTHER! HOW DID RAMA KILL SUCH A WARRIOR? EVEN LIGHTNING COULD NOT HARM HIM!
MY RIGHT HAND IS GONE! I SHALL SURELY NOT SURVIVE. WHEN THE PIOUS VIBHISHANA GAVE ME GOOD ADVICE, I EXPELLED HIM. I AM SHAMED NOW THAT HIS PREDICTIONS HAVE COME TRUE.
RAVANA'S SONS, TRISHIRA, ATIKAAYA, DEVAANTAKA AND NARAANTAKA, CONSOLED HIM.
YOU YOURSELF ARE CAPABLE OF CONQUERING THE THREE WORLDS. WHY DO YOU GIVE WAY TO GRIEF LIKE AN ORDINARY MAN?
YOU CAN EASILY DEFEAT RAMA, BUT STAY HERE IF YOU WISH - I WILL GO AND ROOT OUT YOUR ENEMIES ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
I WILL LEAD THE ATTACK!
NO, I WILL!

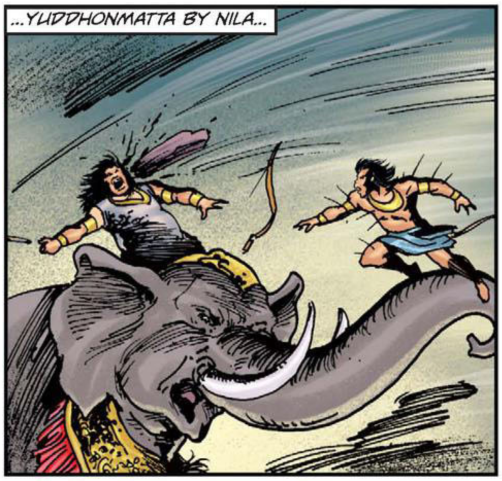

CHEERED BY TRISHIRA'S WORDS, RAVANA BLESSED HIS SONS AND SENT THEM TO BATTLE, WITH HIS BROTHERS MAHAPARSHWA AND MAHODARA TO DEFEND THEM. THESE FIERCE WARRIORS WERE PROTECTED BY BOONS FROM THE DEVAS. THEY KNEW THE SCRIPTURES, MAYA AND MYSTIC MISSILES, AND COULD FLY.
THE TWO ARMIES ATTACKED EACH OTHER FEROCIOUSLY.



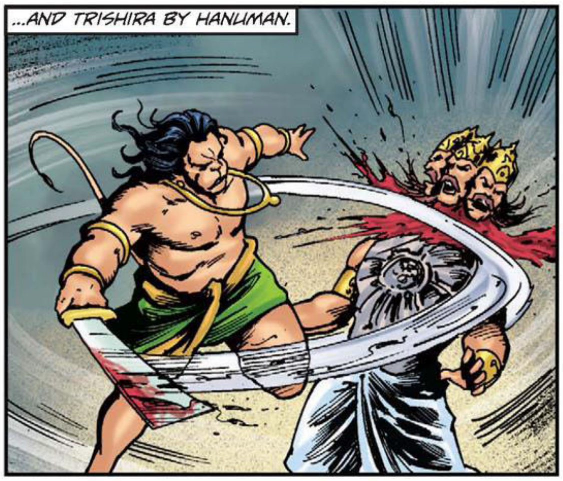
THE VANARAS WERE HARD PRESSED BY THE POWERFUL RAKSHASAS, BUT AFTER A SERIES OF FIERCE BATTLES, NARAANTAKA WAS KILLED BY ANGADA...



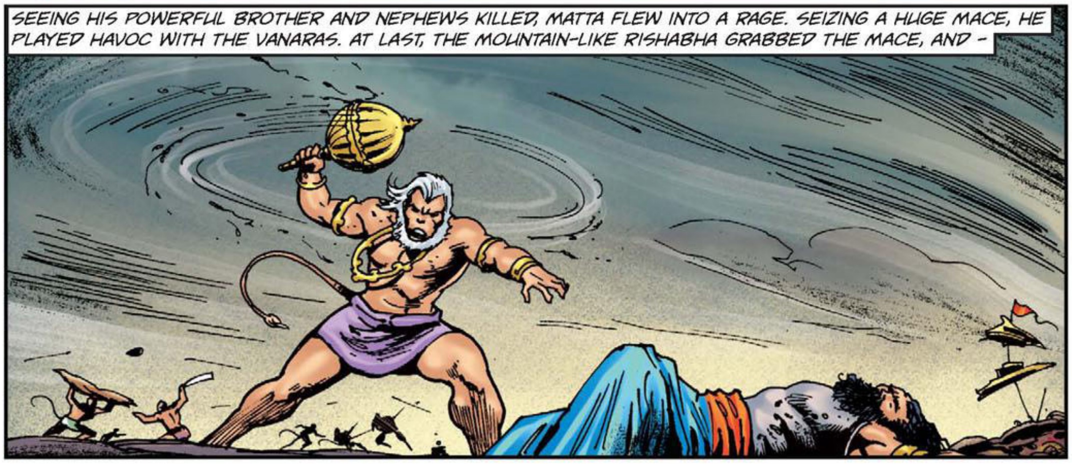
...DEVAANTAKA BY HANUMAN...



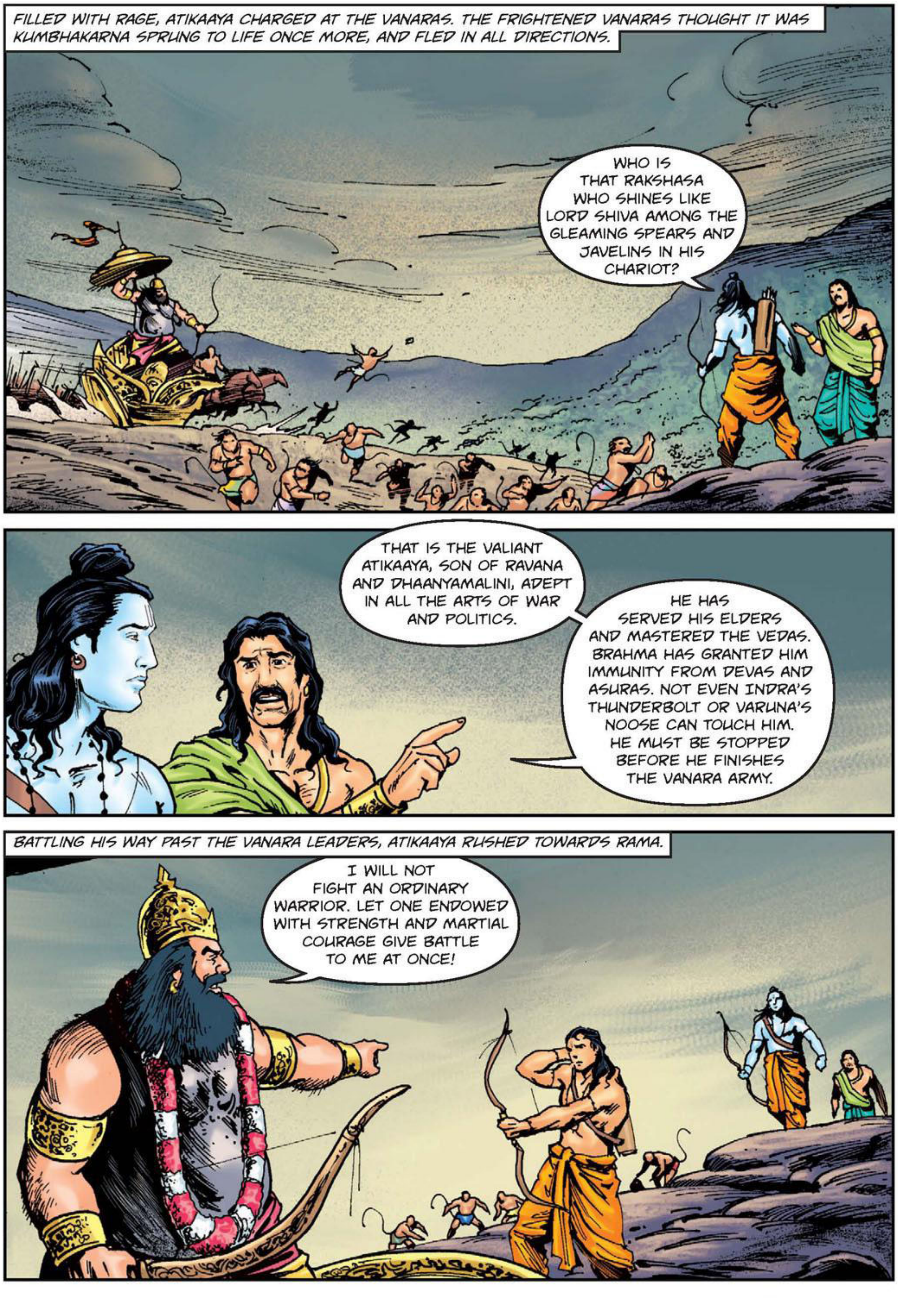
...YUDDHONMATTA BY NILA...

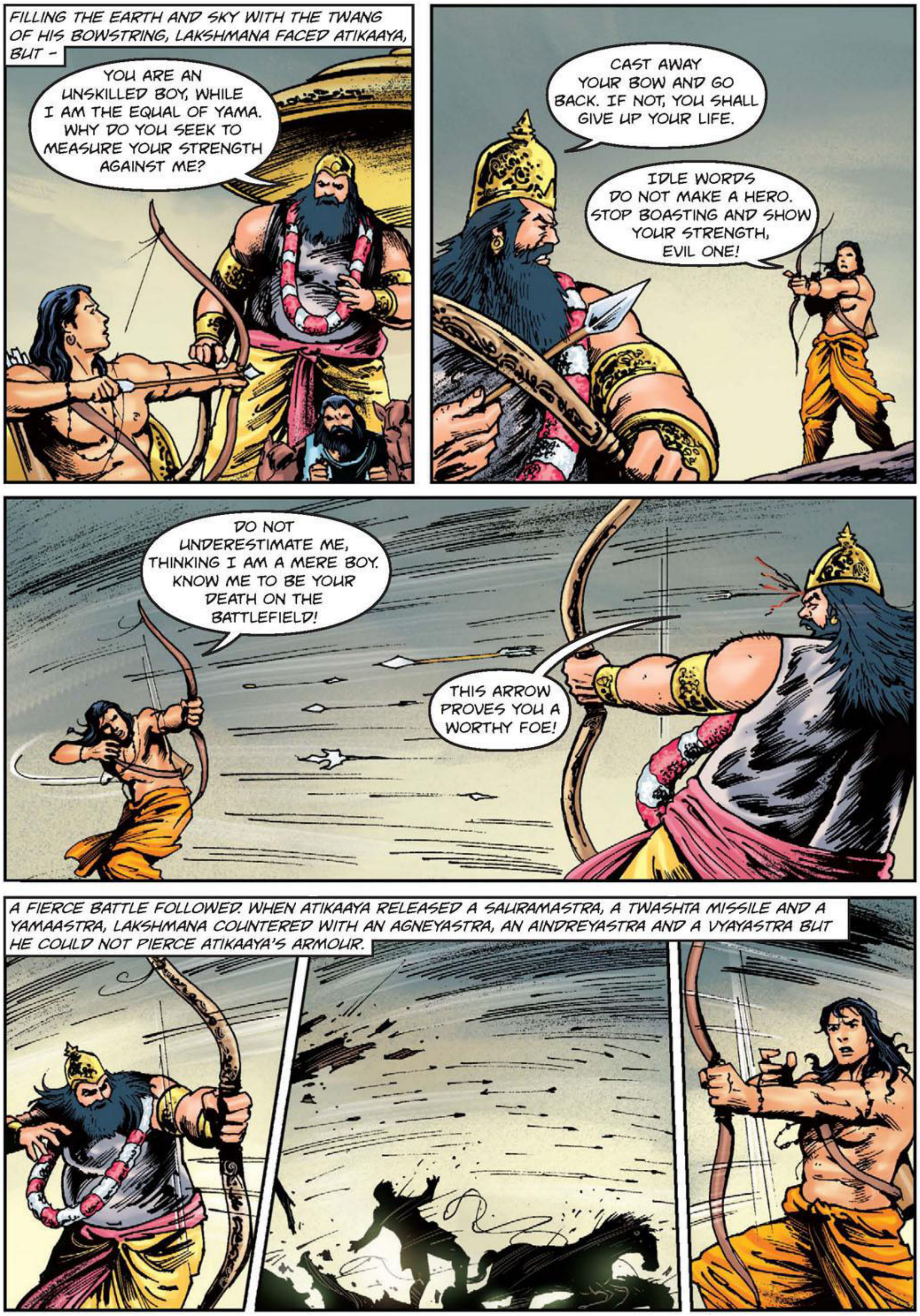


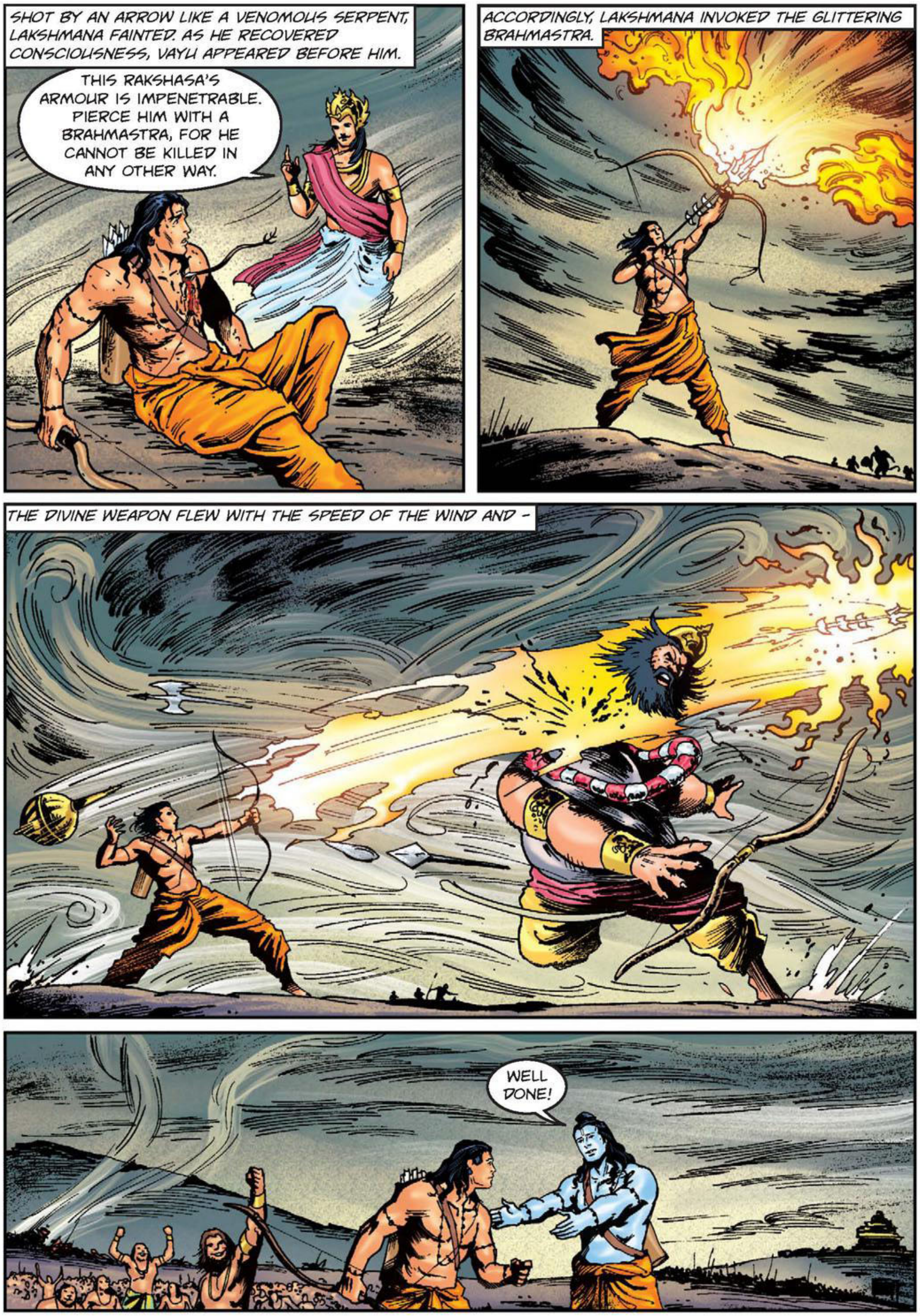
...AND TRISHIRA BY HANUMAN.

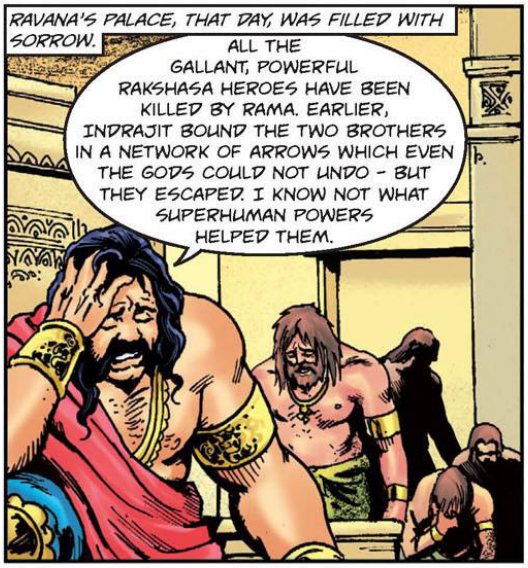


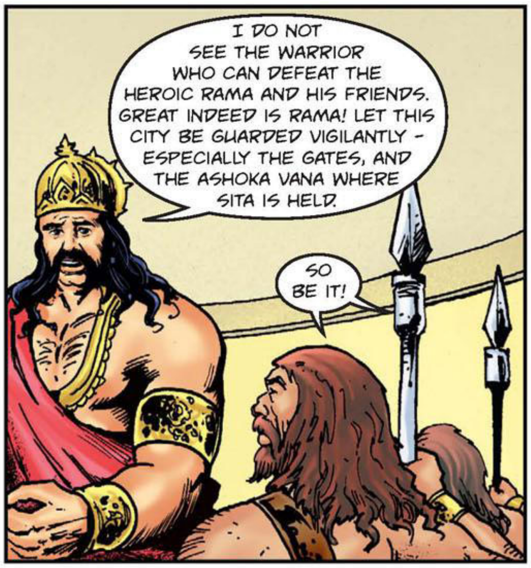
SEEING HIS POWERFUL BROTHER AND NEPHEWS KILLED, MATTA FLEW INTO A RAGE. SEIZING A HUGE MACE, HE PLAYED HAVOC WITH THE VANARAS. AT LAST, THE MOUNTAIN-LIKE RISHABHA GRABBED THE MACE, AND –

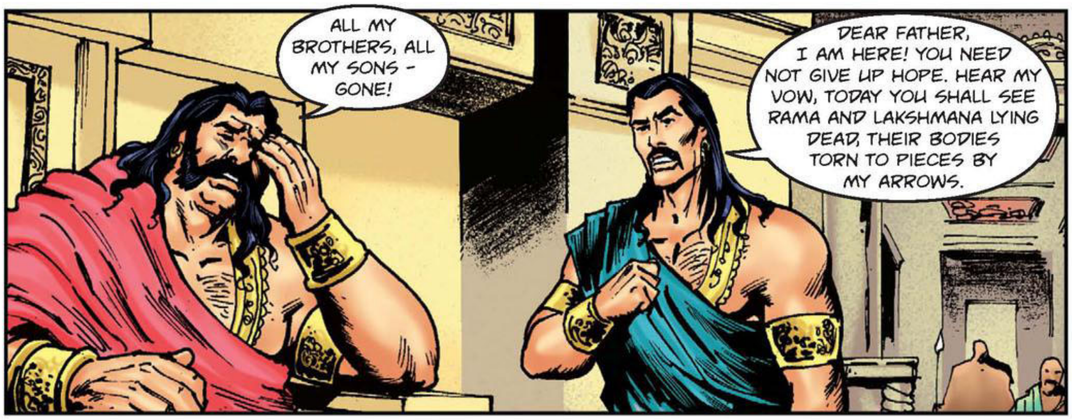

FILLED WITH RAGE, ATIKAAYA CHARGED AT THE VANARAS. THE FRIGHTENED VANARAS THOUGHT IT WAS KUMBHAKARNA SPRUNG TO LIFE ONCE MORE, AND FLED IN ALL DIRECTIONS.
WHO IS THAT RAKSHASA WHO SHINES LIKE LORD SHIVA AMONG THE GLEAMING SPEARS AND JAVELINS IN HIS CHARIOT?
THAT IS THE VALIANT ATIKAAYA, SON OF RAVANA AND DHAANYAMALINI, ADEPT IN ALL THE ARTS OF WAR AND POLITICS.
HE HAS SERVED HIS ELDERS AND MASTERED THE VEDAS. BRAHMA HAS GRANTED HIM IMMUNITY FROM DEVAS AND ASURAS. NOT EVEN INDRA'S THUNDERBOLT OR VARUNA'S NOOSE CAN TOUCH HIM. HE MUST BE STOPPED BEFORE HE FINISHES THE VANARA ARMY.
BATTLING HIS WAY PAST THE VANARA LEADERS, ATIKAAYA RUSHED TOWARDS RAMA.
I WILL NOT FIGHT AN ORDINARY WARRIOR. LET ONE ENDOWED WITH STRENGTH AND MARTIAL COURAGE GIVE BATTLE TO ME AT ONCE!

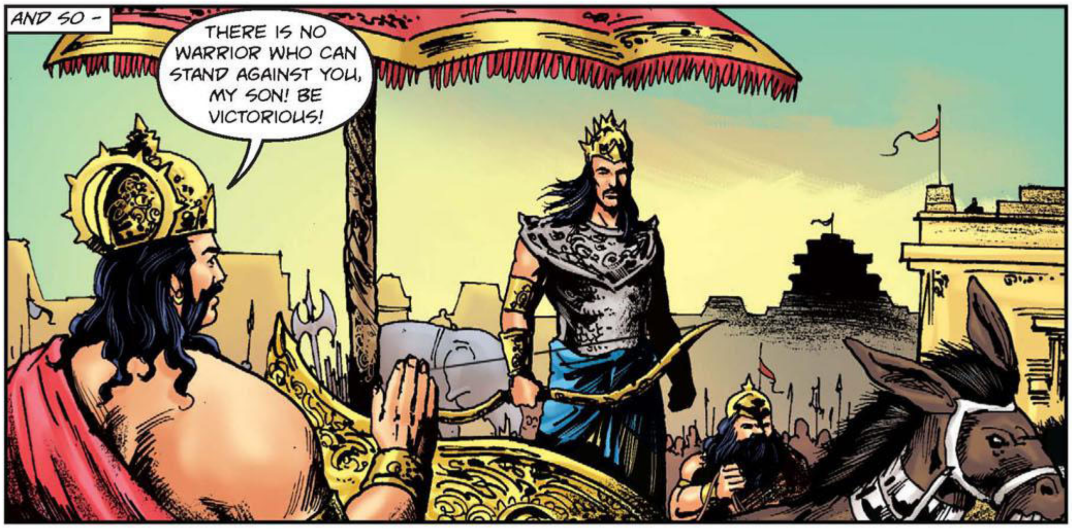

FILLING THE EARTH AND SKY WITH THE TWANG OF HIS BOWSTRING, LAKSHMANA FACED ATIKAAYA, BUT –
YOU ARE AN UNSKILLED BOY, WHILE I AM THE EQUAL OF YAMA. WHY DO YOU SEEK TO MEASURE YOUR STRENGTH AGAINST ME?
CAST AWAY YOUR BOW AND GO BACK. IF NOT, YOU SHALL GIVE UP YOUR LIFE.
IDLE WORDS DO NOT MAKE A HERO. STOP BOASTING AND SHOW YOUR STRENGTH, EVIL ONE!
DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE ME, THINKING I AM A MERE BOY. KNOW ME TO BE YOUR DEATH ON THE BATTLEFIELD!
THIS ARROW PROVES YOU A WORTHY FOE!
A FIERCE BATTLE FOLLOWED. WHEN ATIKAAYA RELEASED A SAURAMASTRA, A TWASHTA MISSILE AND A YAMAASTRA, LAKSHMANA COUNTERED WITH AN AGNEYASTRA, AN AINDREYASTRA AND A VYAYASTRA BUT HE COULD NOT PIERCE ATIKAAYA'S ARMOUR.

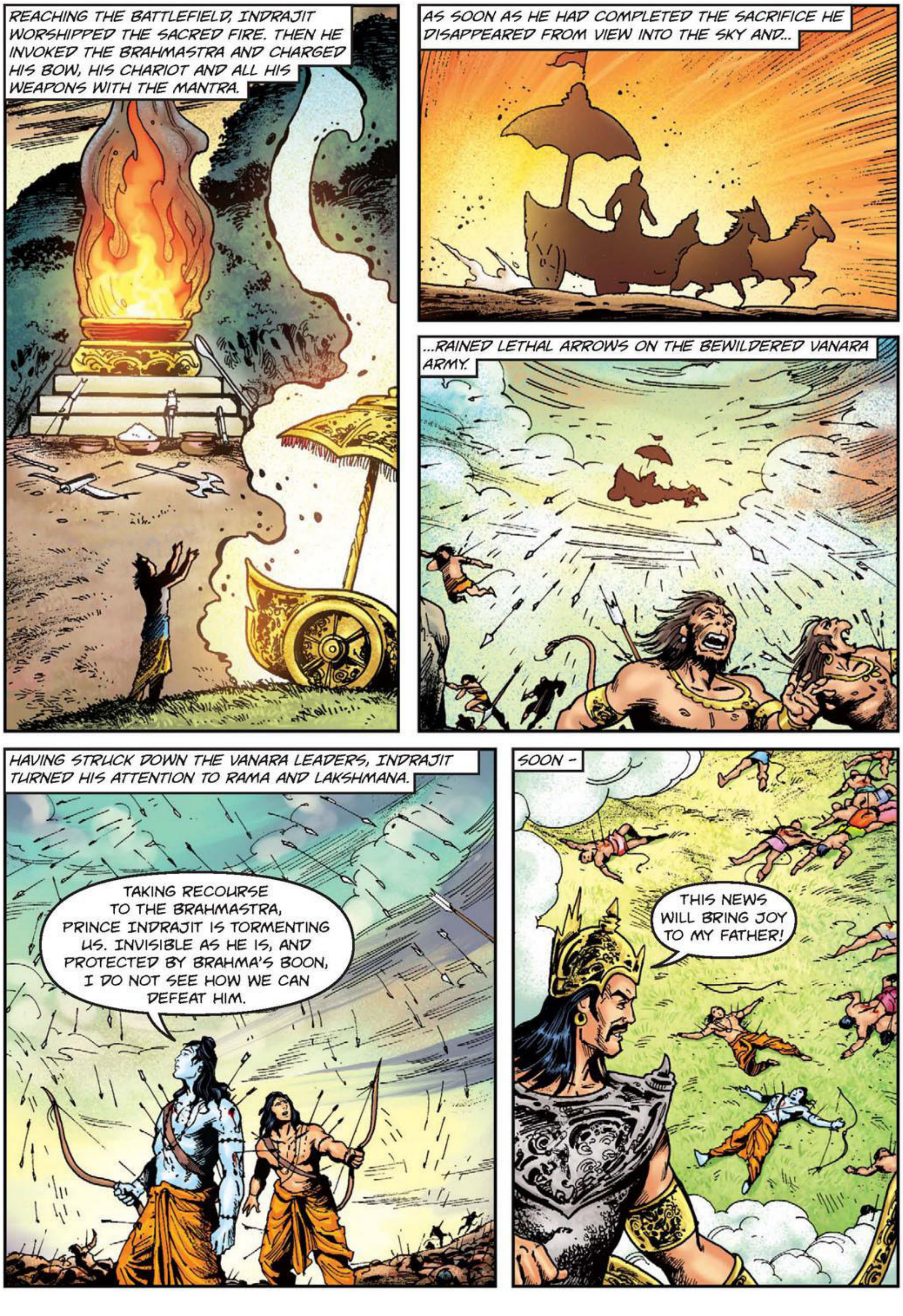

SHOT BY AN ARROW LIKE A VENOMOUS SERPENT, LAKSHMANA FAINTED. AS HE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS, VAYU APPEARED BEFORE HIM.
THIS RAKSHASA'S ARMOUR IS IMPENETRABLE. PIERCE HIM WITH A BRAHMASTRA, FOR HE CANNOT BE KILLED IN ANY OTHER WAY.
ACCORDINGLY, LAKSHMANA INVOKED THE GLITTERING BRAHMASTRA.
THE DIVINE WEAPON FLEW WITH THE SPEED OF THE WIND AND -
WELL DONE!

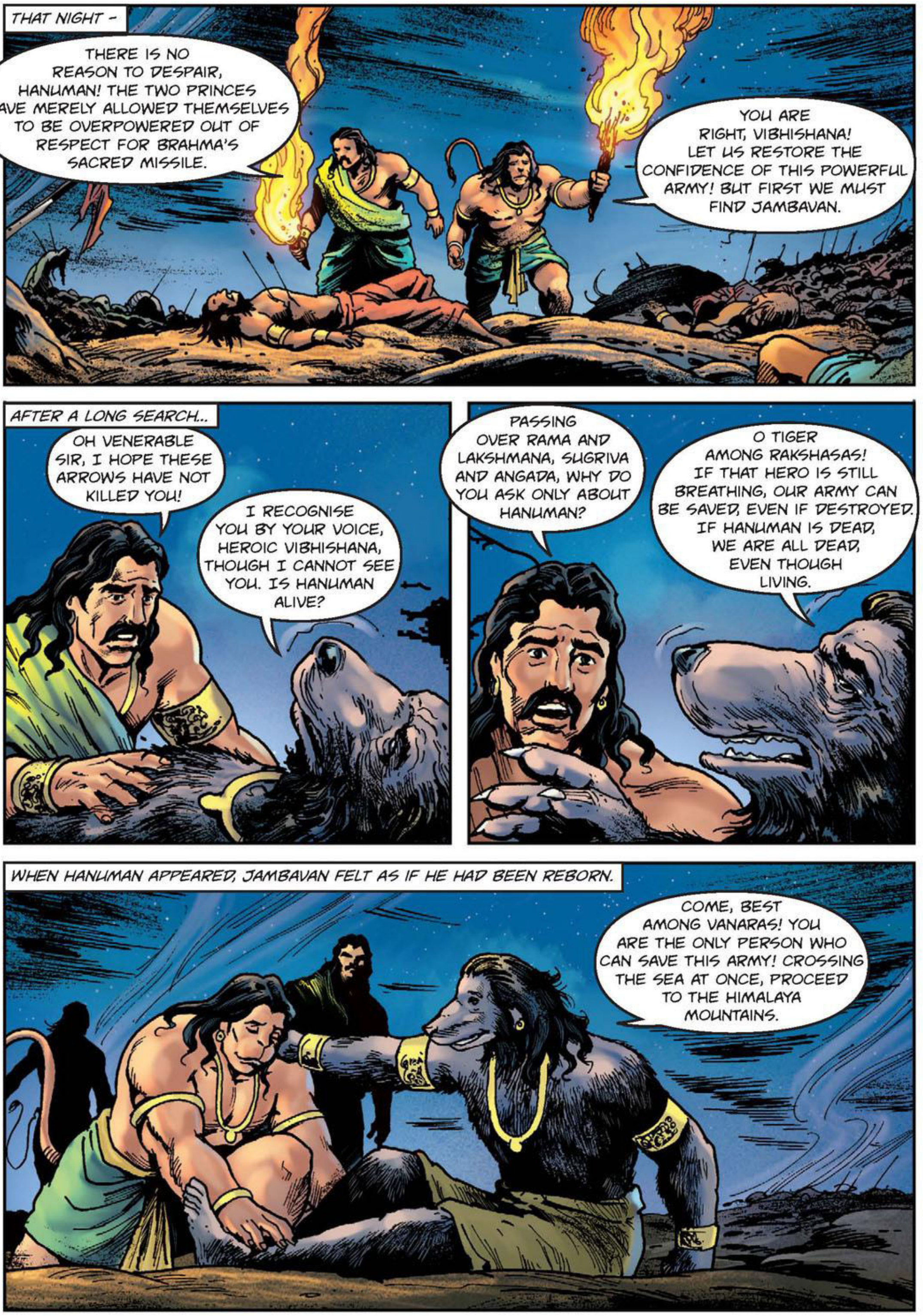

RAVANA'S PALACE, THAT DAY, WAS FILLED WITH SORROW.
ALL THE GALLANT, POWERFUL RAKSHASA HEROES HAVE BEEN KILLED BY RAMA. EARLIER, INDRAJIT BOUND THE TWO BROTHERS IN A NETWORK OF ARROWS WHICH EVEN THE GODS COULD NOT UNDO - BUT THEY ESCAPED. I KNOW NOT WHAT SUPERHUMAN POWERS HELPED THEM.

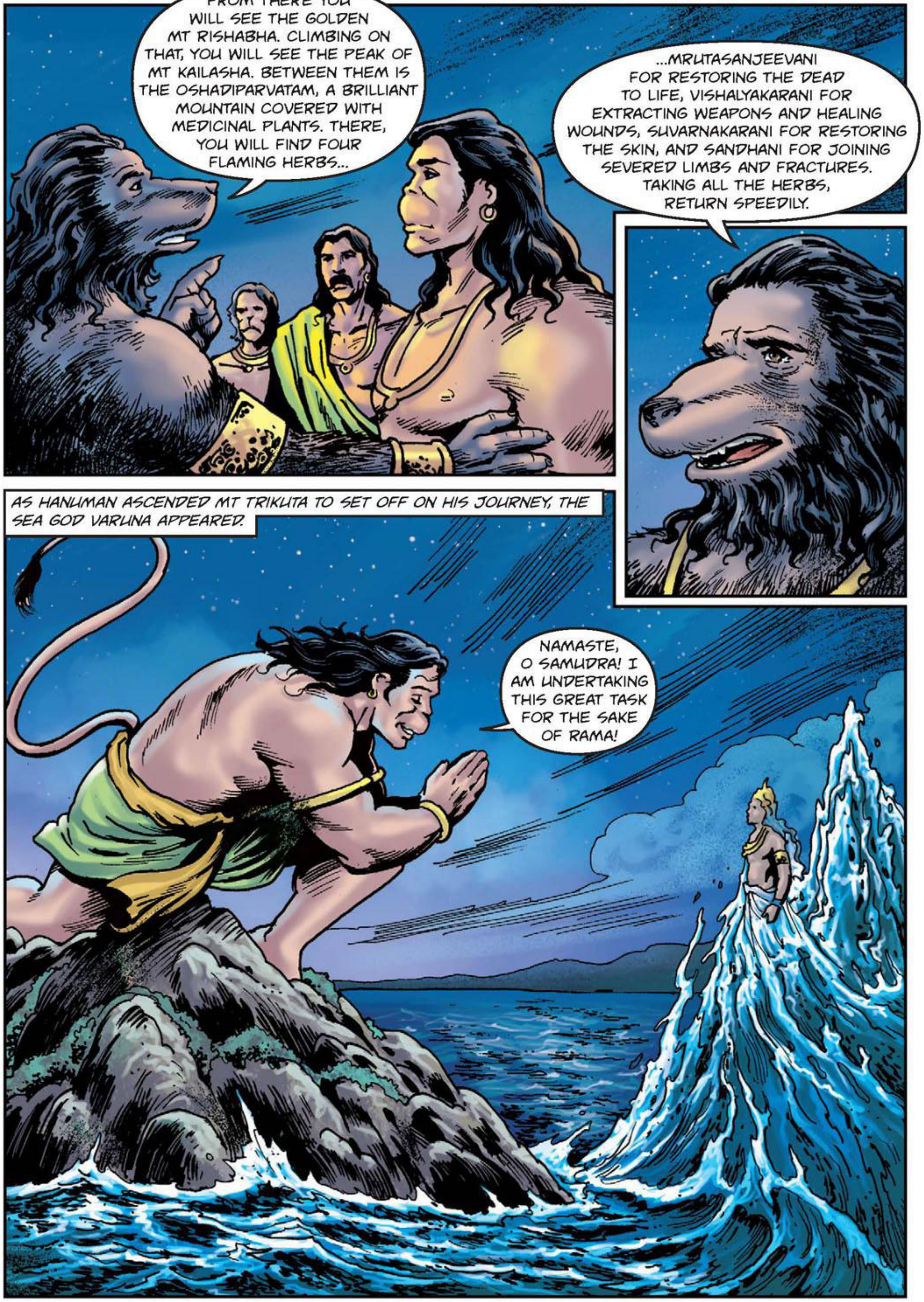

I DO NOT SEE THE WARRIOR WHO CAN DEFEAT THE HEROIC RAMA AND HIS FRIENDS. GREAT INDEED IS RAMA! LET THIS CITY BE GUARDED VIGILANTLY - ESPECIALLY THE GATES, AND THE ASHOKA VANA WHERE SITA IS HELD.
SO BE IT!

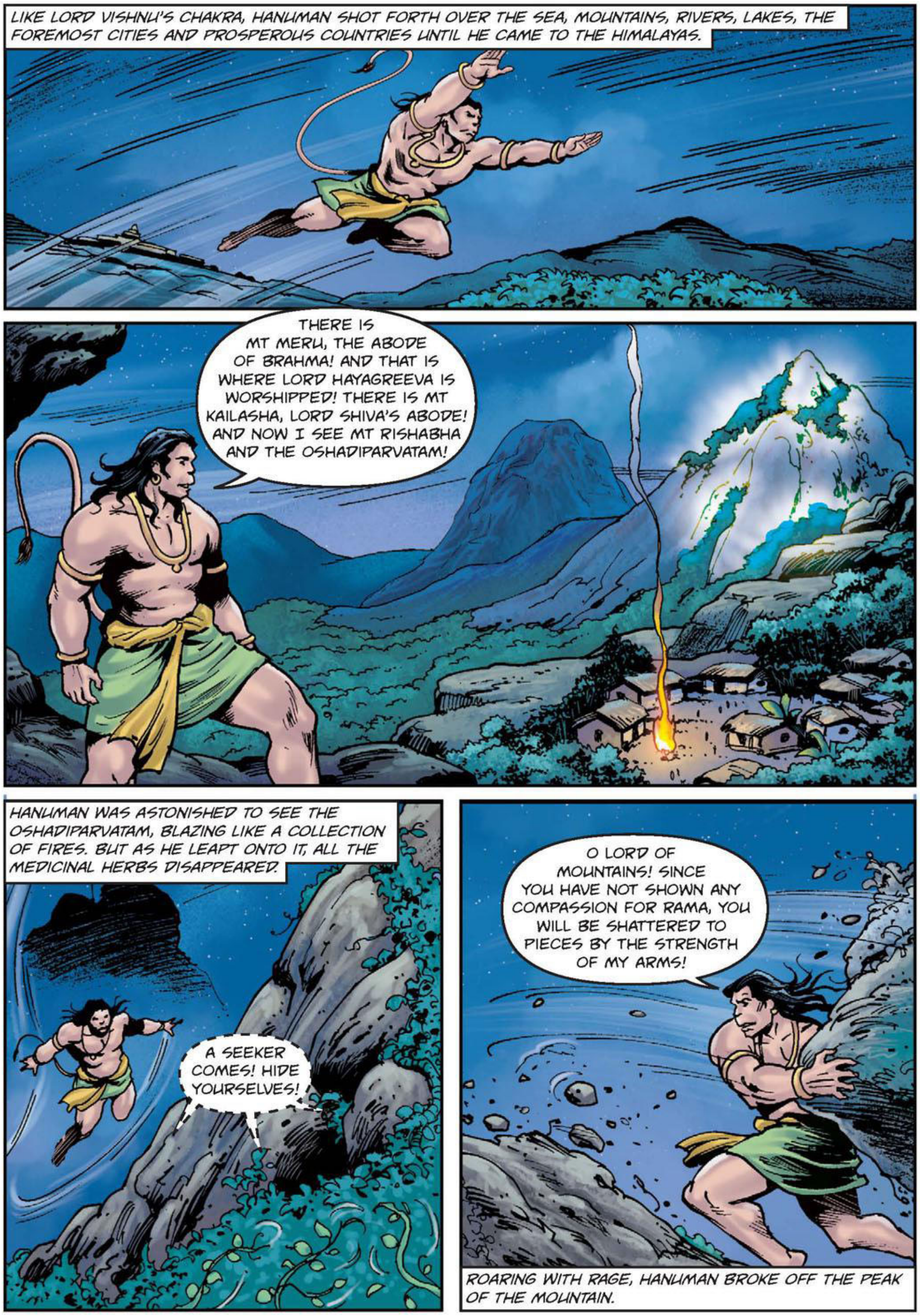

ALL MY BROTHERS, ALL MY SONS - GONE!
DEAR FATHER, I AM HERE! YOU NEED NOT GIVE UP HOPE. HEAR MY VOW, TODAY YOU SHALL SEE RAMA AND LAKSHMANA LYING DEAD, THEIR BODIES TORN TO PIECES BY MY ARROWS.

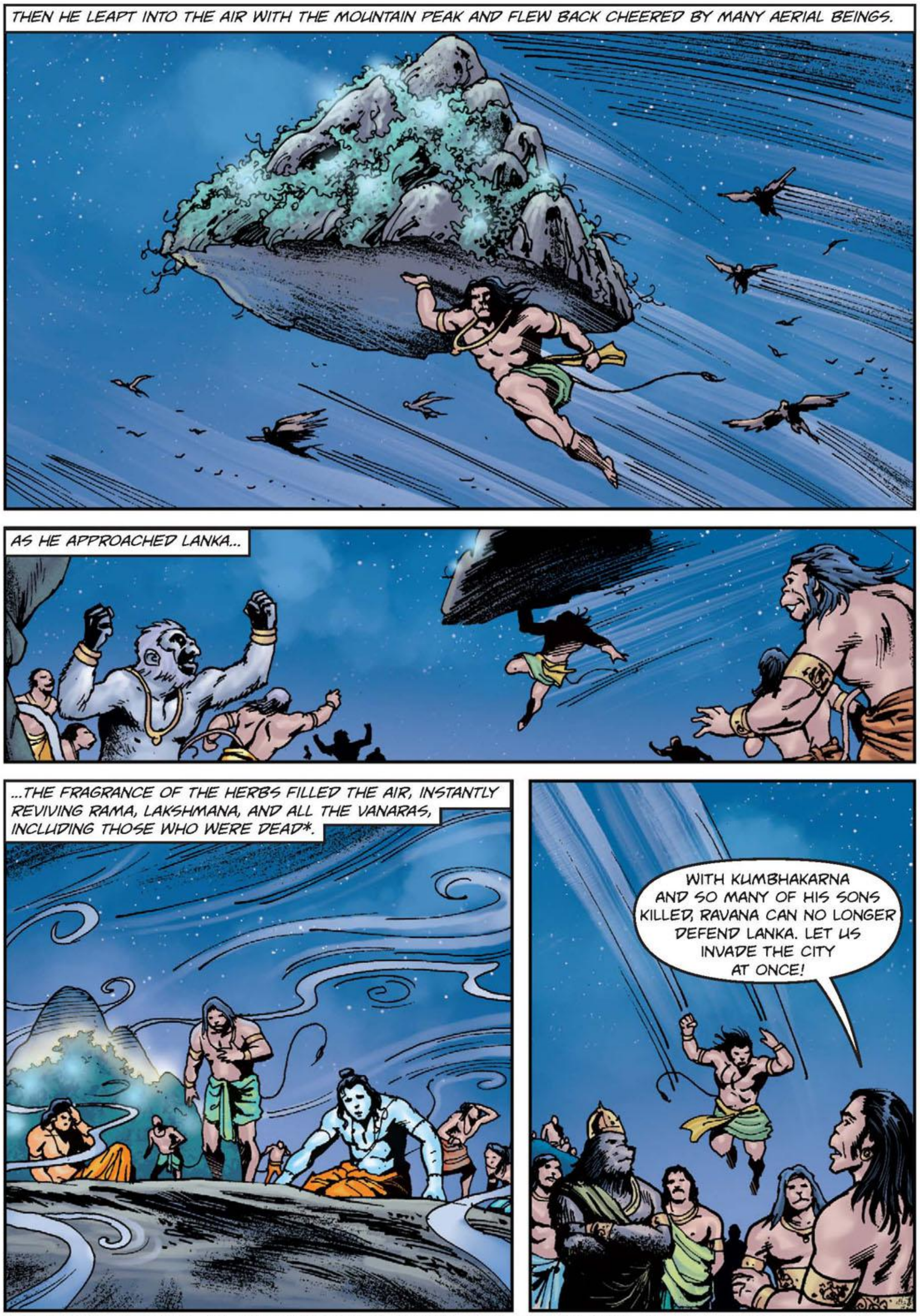

AND SO -
THERE IS NO WARRIOR WHO CAN STAND AGAINST YOU, MY SON! BE VICTORIOUS!


REACHING THE BATTLEFIELD, INDRAJIT WORSHIPPED THE SACRED FIRE. THEN HE INVOKED THE BRAHMASTRA AND CHARGED HIS BOW, HIS CHARIOT AND ALL HIS WEAPONS WITH THE MANTRA.
AS SOON AS HE HAD COMPLETED THE SACRIFICE HE DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW INTO THE SKY AND...
...RAINED LETHAL ARROWS ON THE BEWILDERED VANARA ARMY.
HAVING STRUCK DOWN THE VANARA LEADERS, INDRAJIT TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO RAMA AND LAKSHMANA.
TAKING RECOURSE TO THE BRAHMASTRA, PRINCE INDRAJIT IS TORMENTING US. INVISIBLE AS HE IS, AND PROTECTED BY BRAHMA'S BOON, I DO NOT SEE HOW WE CAN DEFEAT HIM.
SOON -
THIS NEWS WILL BRING JOY TO MY FATHER!

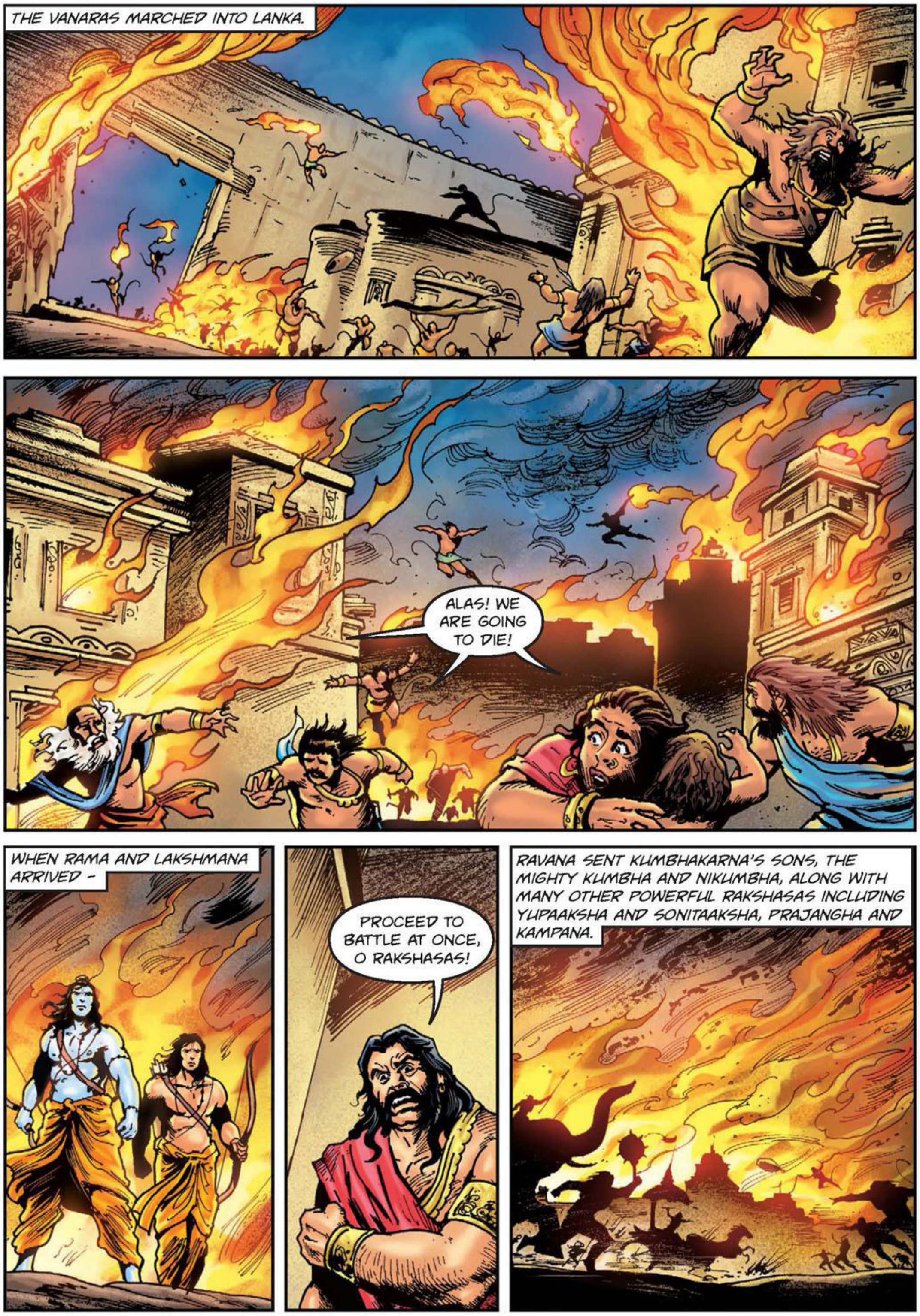

THAT NIGHT -
THERE IS NO REASON TO DESPAIR, HANUMAN! THE TWO PRINCES HAVE MERELY ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE OVERPOWERED OUT OF RESPECT FOR BRAHMA'S SACRED MISSILE.
YOU ARE RIGHT, VIBHISHANA! LET US RESTORE THE CONFIDENCE OF THIS POWERFUL ARMY! BUT FIRST WE MUST FIND JAMBAVAN.
AFTER A LONG SEARCH...
OH VENERABLE SIR, I HOPE THESE ARROWS HAVE NOT KILLED YOU!
I RECOGNISE YOU BY YOUR VOICE, HEROIC VIBHISHANA, THOUGH I CANNOT SEE YOU. IS HANUMAN ALIVE?
PASSING OVER RAMA AND LAKSHMANA, SUGRIVA AND ANGADA, WHY DO YOU ASK ONLY ABOUT HANUMAN?
O TIGER AMONG RAKSHASAS! IF THAT HERO IS STILL BREATHING, OUR ARMY CAN BE SAVED, EVEN IF DESTROYED. IF HANUMAN IS DEAD, WE ARE ALL DEAD, EVEN THOUGH LIVING.
WHEN HANUMAN APPEARED, JAMBAVAN FELT AS IF HE HAD BEEN REBORN.
COME, BEST AMONG VANARAS! YOU ARE THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN SAVE THIS ARMY! CROSSING THE SEA AT ONCE, PROCEED TO THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS.

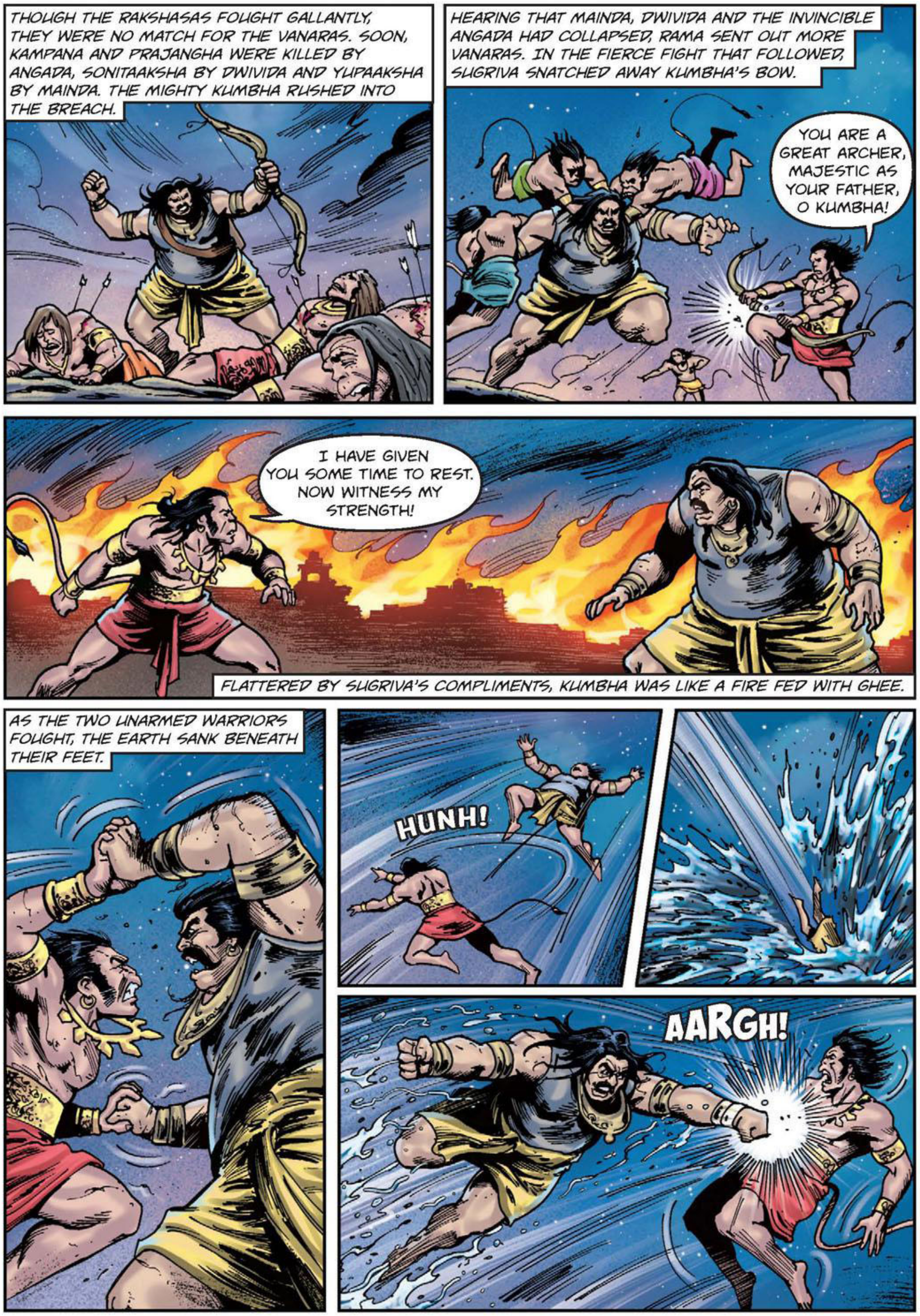

FROM THERE YOU WILL SEE THE GOLDEN MT RISHABHA. CLIMBING ON THAT, YOU WILL SEE THE PEAK OF MT KAILASHA. BETWEEN THEM IS THE OSHADIPARVATAM, A BRILLIANT MOUNTAIN COVERED WITH MEDICINAL PLANTS. THERE, YOU WILL FIND FOUR FLAMING HERBS...
...MRUTASANJEEVANI FOR RESTORING THE DEAD TO LIFE, VISHALYAKARANI FOR EXTRACTING WEAPONS AND HEALING WOUNDS, SUVARNAKARANI FOR RESTORING THE SKIN, AND SANDHANI FOR JOINING SEVERED LIMBS AND FRACTURES. TAKING ALL THE HERBS, RETURN SPEEDILY.
AS HANUMAN ASCENDED MT TRIKUTA TO SET OFF ON HIS JOURNEY, THE SEA GOD VARUNA APPEARED.
NAMASTE, O SAMUDRA! I AM UNDERTAKING THIS GREAT TASK FOR THE SAKE OF RAMA!

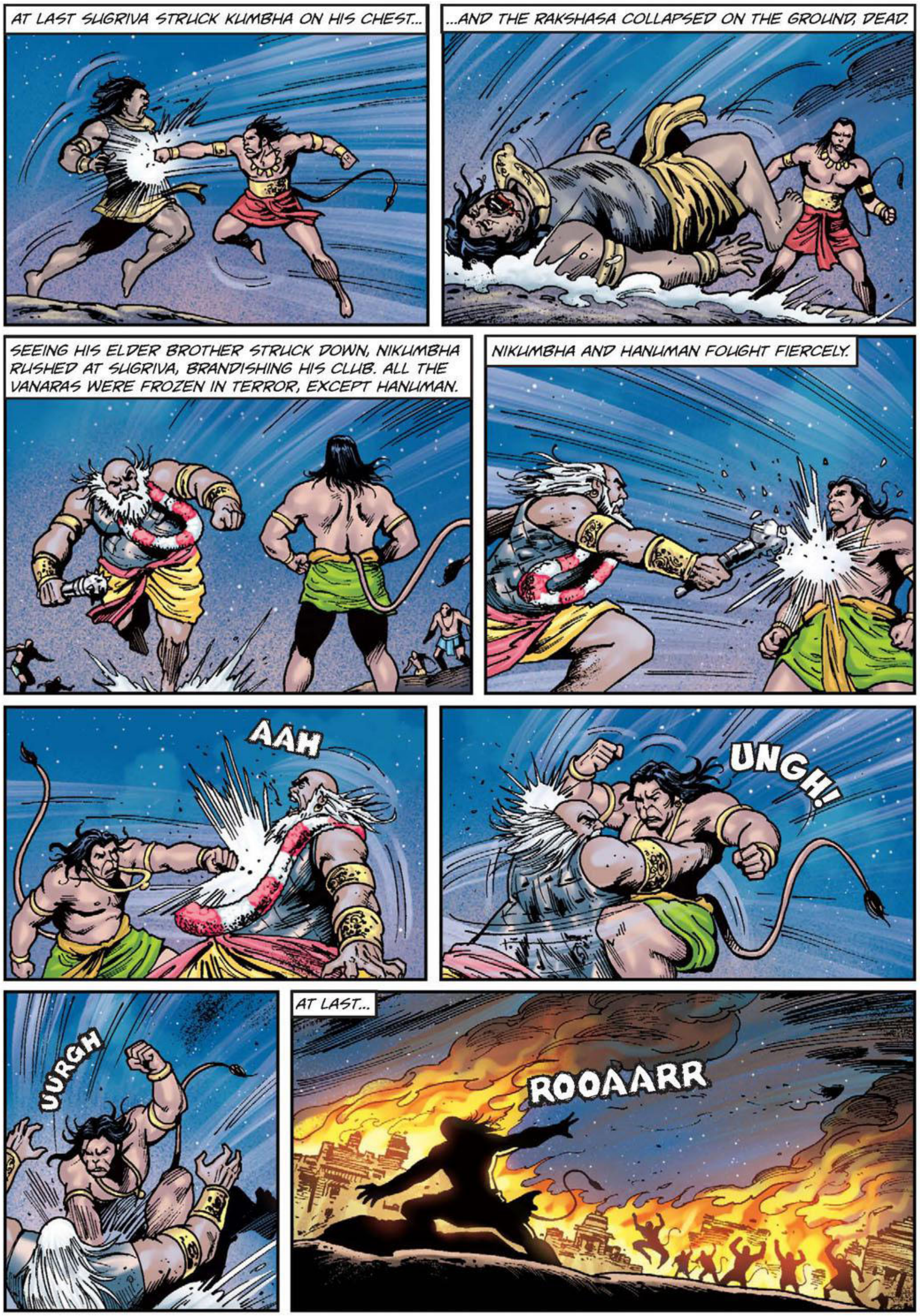

LIKE LORD VISHNU'S CHAKRA, HANUMAN SHOT FORTH OVER THE SEA, MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, LAKES, THE FOREMOST CITIES AND PROSPEROUS COUNTRIES UNTIL HE CAME TO THE HIMALAYAS.
THERE IS MT MERU, THE ABODE OF BRAHMA! AND THAT IS WHERE LORD HAYAGREEVA IS WORSHIPPED! THERE IS MT KAILASHA, LORD SHIVA'S ABODE! AND NOW I SEE MT RISHABHA AND THE OSHADIPARVATAM!
HANUMAN WAS ASTONISHED TO SEE THE OSHADIPARVATAM, BLAZING LIKE A COLLECTION OF FIRES. BUT AS HE LEAPT ONTO IT, ALL THE MEDICINAL HERBS DISAPPEARED.
A SEEKER COMES! HIDE YOURSELVES!
O LORD OF MOUNTAINS! SINCE YOU HAVE NOT SHOWN ANY COMPASSION FOR RAMA, YOU WILL BE SHATTERED TO PIECES BY THE STRENGTH OF MY ARMS!
ROARING WITH RAGE, HANUMAN BROKE OFF THE PEAK OF THE MOUNTAIN.

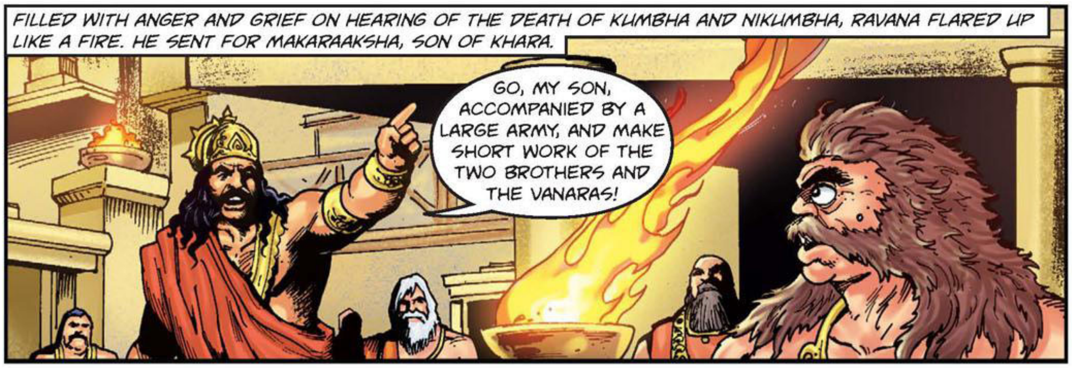

THEN HE LEAPT INTO THE AIR WITH THE MOUNTAIN PEAK AND FLEW BACK CHEERED BY MANY AERIAL BEINGS.
AS HE APPROACHED LANKA...
...THE FRAGRANCE OF THE HERBS FILLED THE AIR, INSTANTLY REVIVING RAMA, LAKSHMANA, AND ALL THE VANARAS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO WERE DEAD*.
WITH KUMBHAKARNA AND SO MANY OF HIS SONS KILLED, RAVANA CAN NO LONGER DEFEND LANKA. LET US INVADE THE CITY AT ONCE!

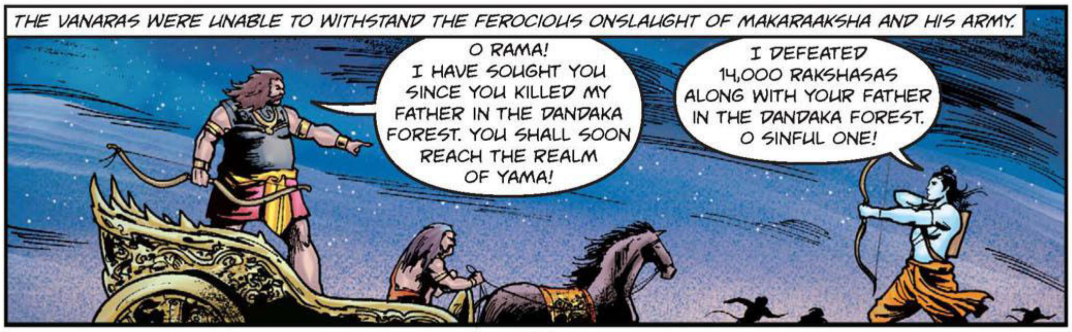
*ON RAVANA'S ORDERS, ALL THE DEAD RAKSHASAS HAD BEEN CAST INTO THE SEA SO THAT NO ONE WOULD KNOW HOW MANY HAD BEEN KILLED. BECAUSE OF THIS, THE HERBS COULD NOT REVIVE THEM.

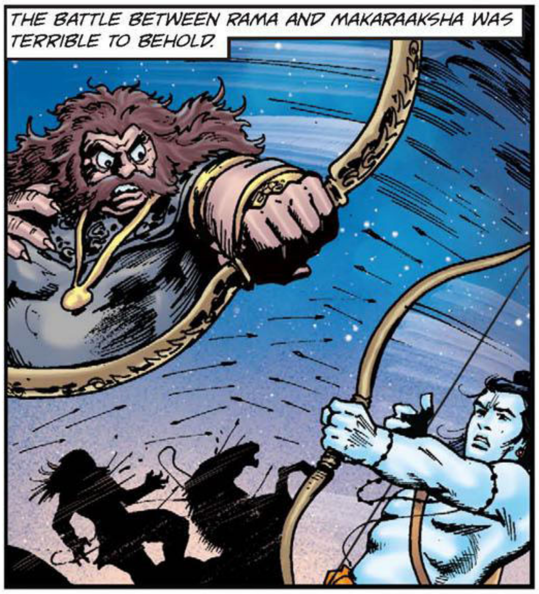

THE VANARAS MARCHED INTO LANKA.
ALAS! WE ARE GOING TO DIE!
WHEN RAMA AND LAKSHMANA ARRIVED -
PROCEED TO BATTLE AT ONCE, O RAKSHASAS!
RAVANA SENT KUMBHAKARNA'S SONS, THE MIGHTY KUMBHA AND NIKUMBHA, ALONG WITH MANY OTHER POWERFUL RAKSHASAS INCLUDING YUPAAKSHA AND SONITAAKSHA, PRAJANGHA AND KAMPANA.

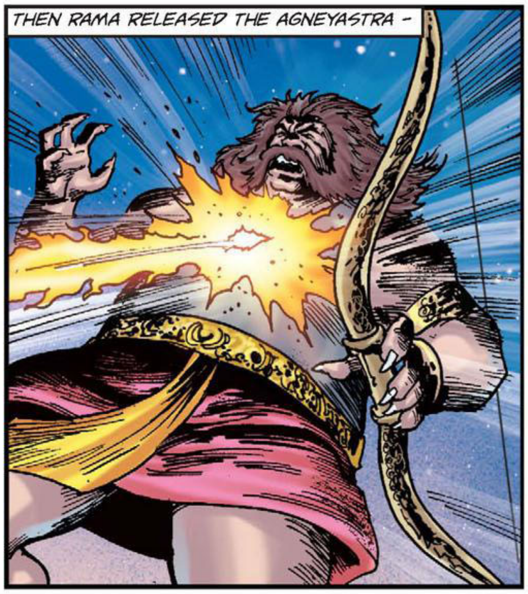

THOUGH THE RAKSHASAS FOUGHT GALLANTLY, THEY WERE NO MATCH FOR THE VANARAS. SOON, KAMPANA AND PRAJANGHA WERE KILLED BY ANGADA, SONITAAKSHA BY DWIVIDA AND YUPAAKSHA BY MAINDA. THE MIGHTY KUMBHA RUSHED INTO THE BREACH.
HEARING THAT MAINDA, DWIVIDA AND THE INVINCIBLE ANGADA HAD COLLAPSED, RAMA SENT OUT MORE VANARAS. IN THE FIERCE FIGHT THAT FOLLOWED, SUGRIVA SNATCHED AWAY KUMBHA'S BOW.
YOU ARE A GREAT ARCHER, MAJESTIC AS YOUR FATHER, O KUMBHA!
I HAVE GIVEN YOU SOME TIME TO REST. NOW WITNESS MY STRENGTH!
FLATTERED BY SUGRIVA'S COMPLIMENTS, KUMBHA WAS LIKE A FIRE FED WITH GHEE.
AS THE TWO UNARMED WARRIORS FOUGHT, THE EARTH SANK BENEATH THEIR FEET.
HUNH!
AARGH!

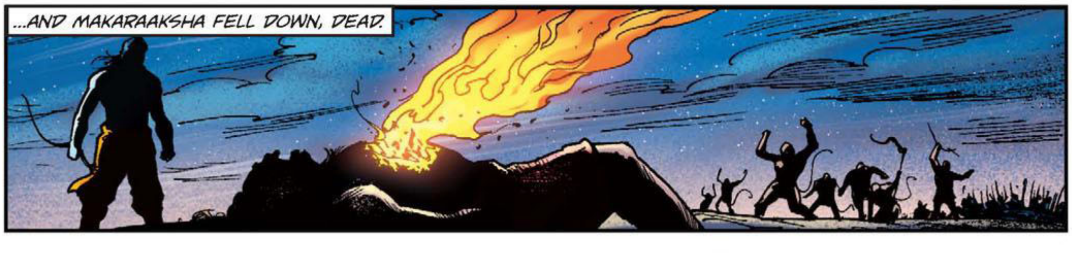

AT LAST SUGRIVA STRUCK KUMBHA ON HIS CHEST...
...AND THE RAKSHASA COLLAPSED ON THE GROUND, DEAD.
SEEING HIS ELDER BROTHER STRUCK DOWN, NIKUMBHA RUSHED AT SUGRIVA, BRANDISHING HIS CLUB. ALL THE VANARAS WERE FROZEN IN TERROR, EXCEPT HANUMAN.
NIKUMBHA AND HANUMAN FOUGHT FIERCELY.
AAH
UNGH!
UURGH
AT LAST...
ROOAARR


FILLED WITH ANGER AND GRIEF ON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF KUMBHA AND NIKUMBHA, RAVANA FLARED UP LIKE A FIRE. HE SENT FOR MAKARAAKSHA, SON OF KHARA.
GO, MY SON, ACCOMPANIED BY A LARGE ARMY, AND MAKE SHORT WORK OF THE TWO BROTHERS AND THE VANARAS!

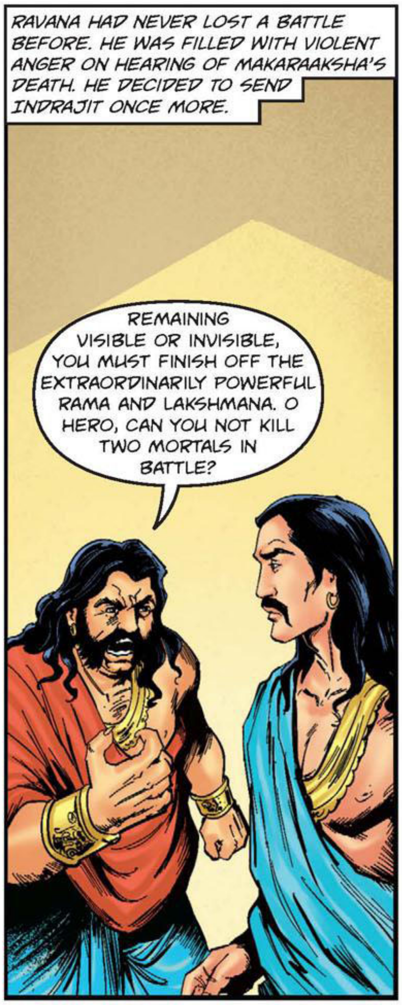

THE VANARAS WERE UNABLE TO WITHSTAND THE FEROCIOUS ONSLAUGHT OF MAKARAAKSHA AND HIS ARMY.
O RAMA! I HAVE SOUGHT YOU SINCE YOU KILLED MY FATHER IN THE DANDAKA FOREST. YOU SHALL SOON REACH THE REALM OF YAMA!
I DEFEATED 14,000 RAKSHASAS ALONG WITH YOUR FATHER IN THE DANDAKA FOREST. O SINFUL ONE!


THE BATTLE BETWEEN RAMA AND MAKARAAKSHA WAS TERRIBLE TO BEHOLD.

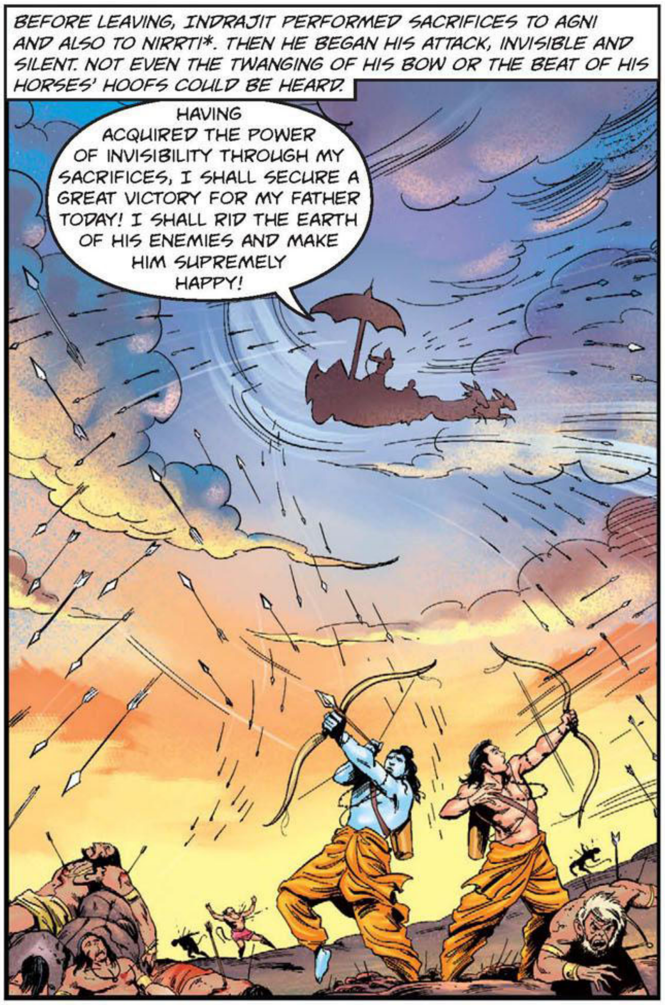

THEN RAMA RELEASED THE AGNEYASTRA –

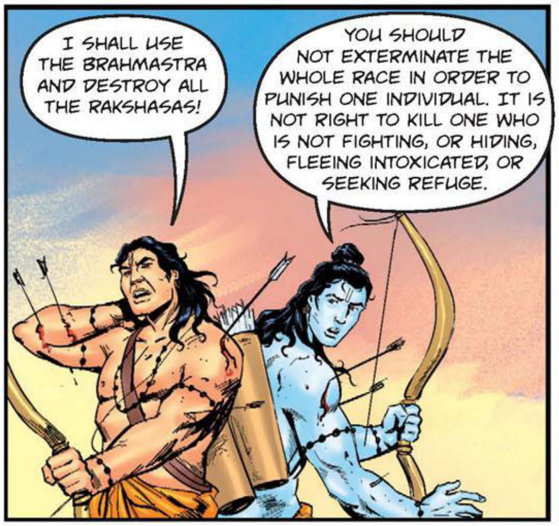

...AND MAKARAAKSHA FELL DOWN, DEAD.

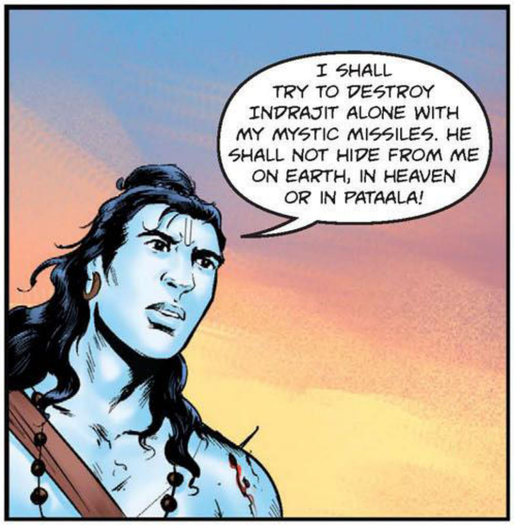
RAVANA HAD NEVER LOST A BATTLE BEFORE. HE WAS FILLED WITH VIOLENT ANGER ON HEARING OF MAKARAAKSHA'S DEATH. HE DECIDED TO SEND INDRAJIT ONCE MORE.


REMAINING VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE, YOU MUST FINISH OFF THE EXTRAORDINARILY POWERFUL RAMA AND LAKSHMANA. O HERO, CAN YOU NOT KILL TWO MORTALS IN BATTLE?

BEFORE LEAVING, INDRAJIT PERFORMED SACRIFICES TO AGNI AND ALSO TO NIRRTI*. THEN HE BEGAN HIS ATTACK, INVISIBLE AND SILENT. NOT EVEN THE TWANGING OF HIS BOW OR THE BEAT OF HIS HORSES' HOOFS COULD BE HEARD.


HAVING ACQUIRED THE POWER OF INVISIBILITY THROUGH MY SACRIFICES, I SHALL SECURE A GREAT VICTORY FOR MY FATHER TODAY! I SHALL RID THE EARTH OF HIS ENEMIES AND MAKE HIM SUPREMELY HAPPY!


I SHALL USE THE BRAHMASTRA AND DESTROY ALL THE RAKSHASAS!
YOU SHOULD NOT EXTERMINATE THE WHOLE RACE IN ORDER TO PUNISH ONE INDIVIDUAL. IT IS NOT RIGHT TO KILL ONE WHO IS NOT FIGHTING, OR HIDING, FLEEING INTOXICATED, OR SEEKING REFUGE.


I SHALL TRY TO DESTROY INDRAJIT ALONE WITH MY MYSTIC MISSILES. HE SHALL NOT HIDE FROM ME ON EARTH, IN HEAVEN OR IN PATAALA!

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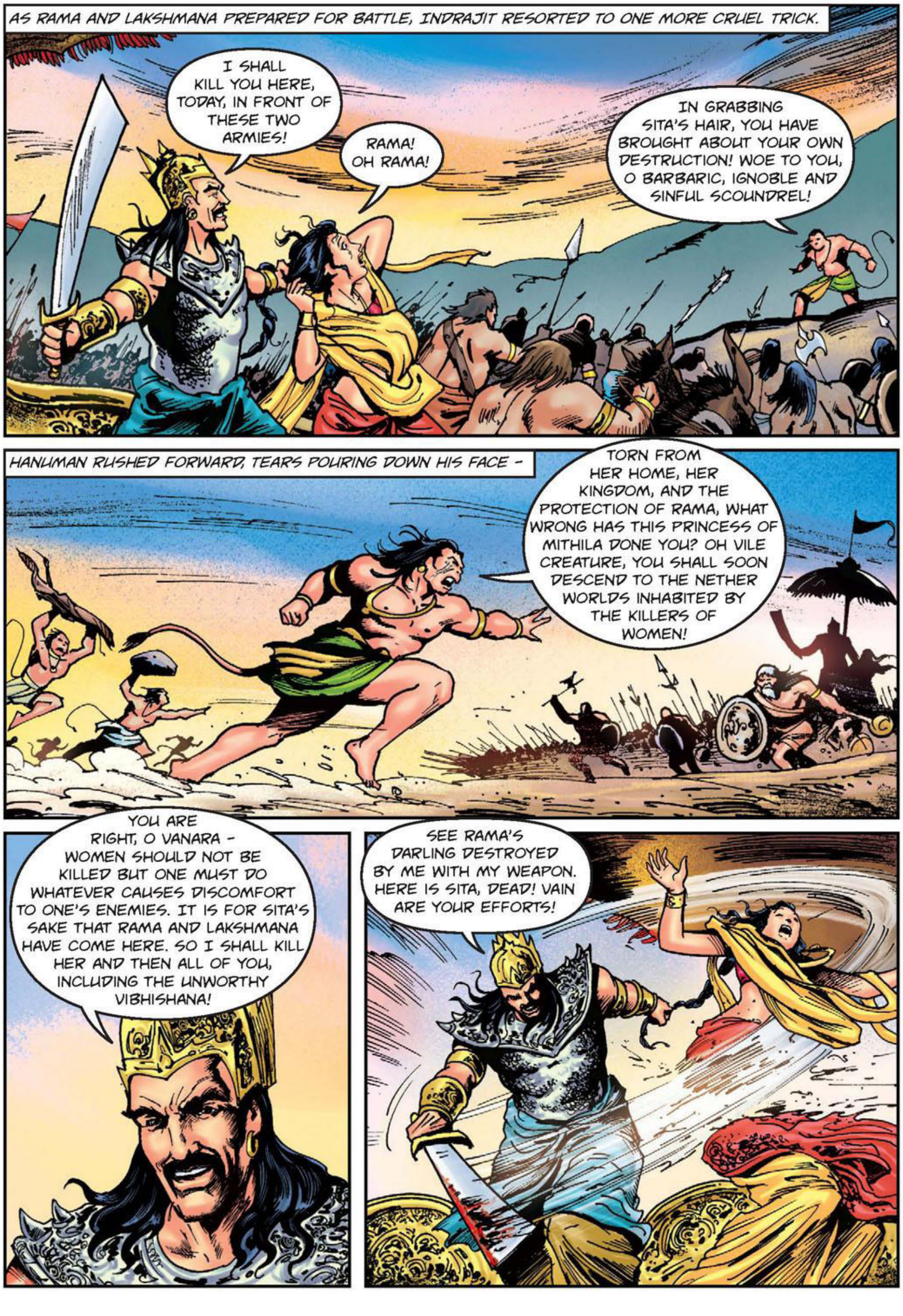
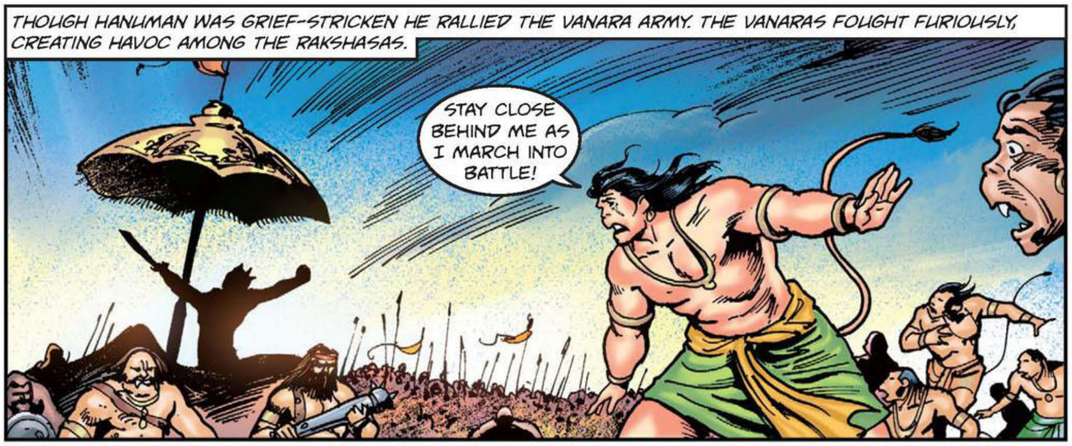
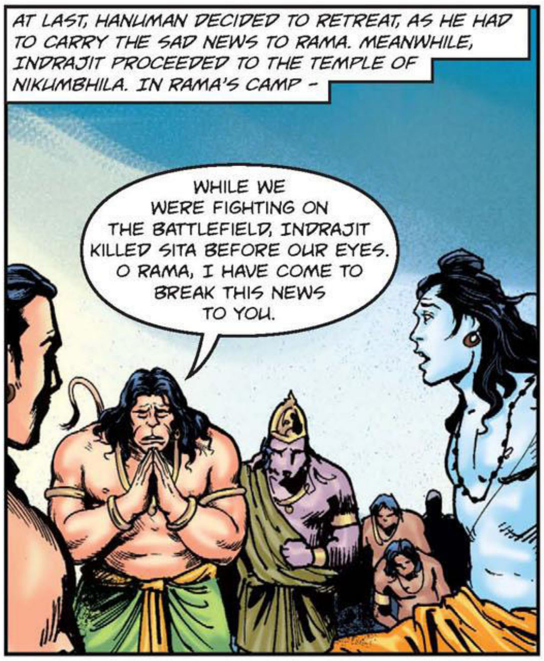
*ANCESTOR OF THE RAKSHASAS


AS RAMA AND LAKSHMANA PREPARED FOR BATTLE, INDRAJIT RESORTED TO ONE MORE CRUEL TRICK.
I SHALL KILL YOU HERE, TODAY, IN FRONT OF THESE TWO ARMIES!
RAMA! OH RAMA!
IN GRABBING SITA'S HAIR, YOU HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT YOUR OWN DESTRUCTION! WOE TO YOU, O BARBARIC, IGNOBLE AND SINFUL SCOUNDREL!
HANUMAN RUSHED FORWARD, TEARS POURING DOWN HIS FACE –
TORN FROM HER HOME, HER KINGDOM, AND THE PROTECTION OF RAMA, WHAT WRONG HAS THIS PRINCESS OF MITHILA DONE YOU? OH VILE CREATURE, YOU SHALL SOON DESCEND TO THE NETHER WORLDS INHABITED BY THE KILLERS OF WOMEN!
YOU ARE RIGHT, O VANARA – WOMEN SHOULD NOT BE KILLED BUT ONE MUST DO WHATEVER CAUSES DISCOMFORT TO ONE'S ENEMIES. IT IS FOR SITA'S SAKE THAT RAMA AND LAKSHMANA HAVE COME HERE. SO I SHALL KILL HER AND THEN ALL OF YOU, INCLUDING THE UNWORTHY VIBHISHANA!
SEE RAMA'S DARLING DESTROYED BY ME WITH MY WEAPON. HERE IS SITA, DEAD! VAIN ARE YOUR EFFORTS!

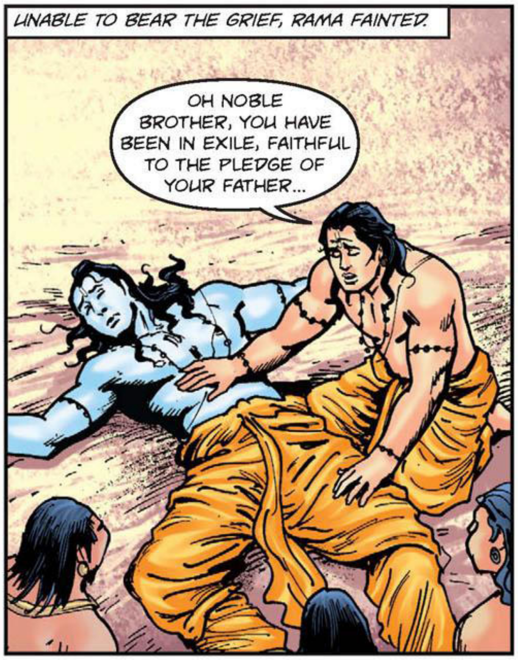
THOUGH HANUMAN WAS GRIEF-STRICKEN HE RALLIED THE VANARA ARMY. THE VANARAS FOUGHT FURIOUSLY, CREATING HAVOC AMONG THE RAKSHASAS.

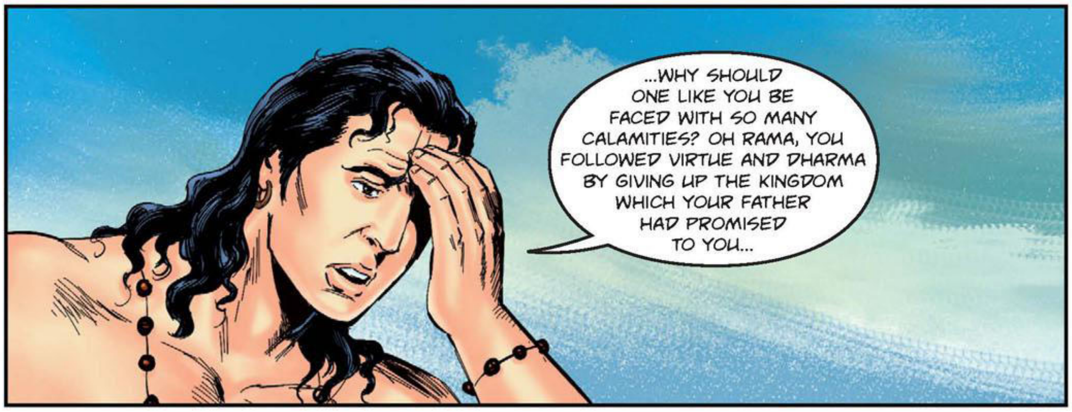

STAY CLOSE BEHIND ME AS I MARCH INTO BATTLE!

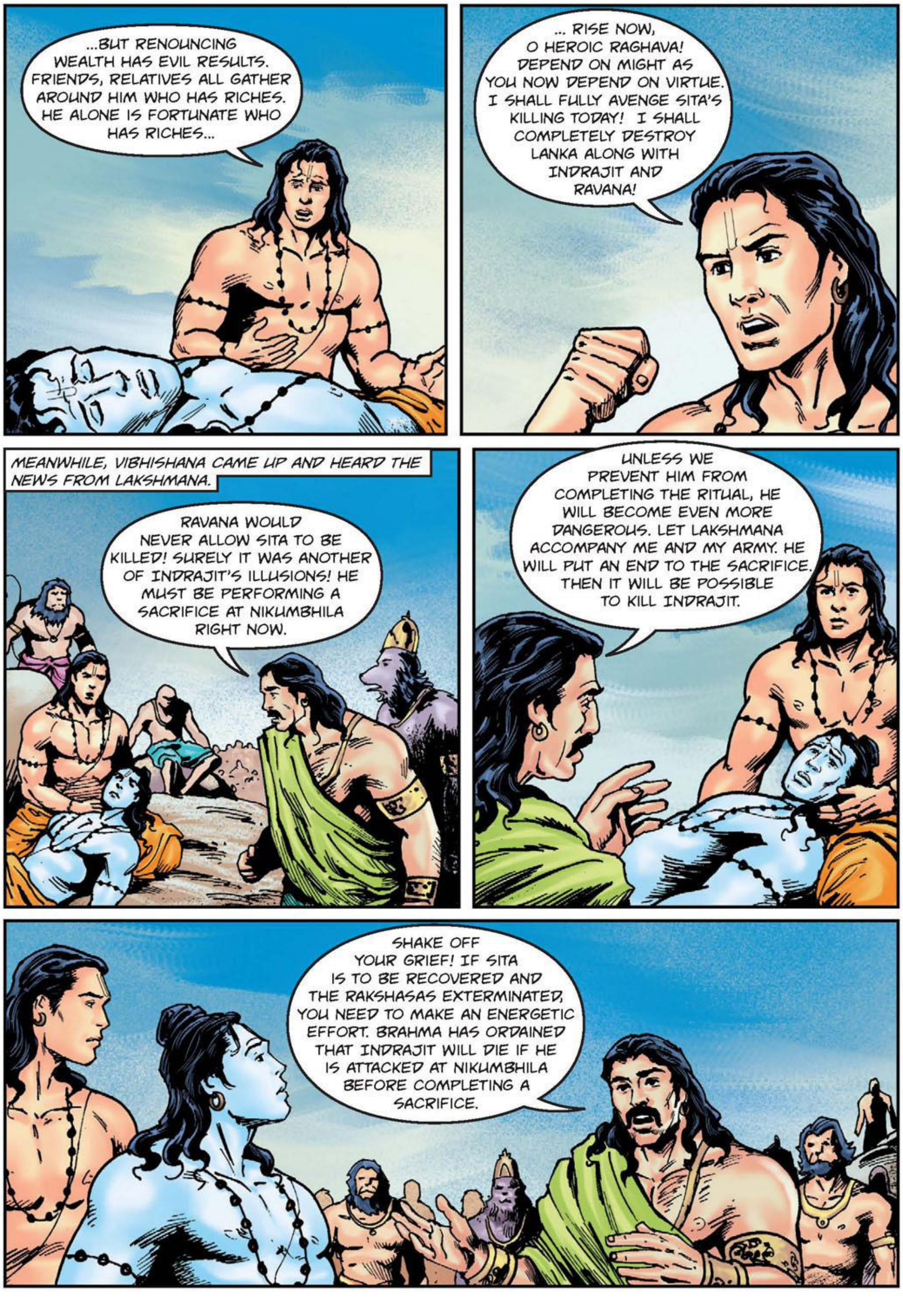
AT LAST, HANUMAN DECIDED TO RETREAT, AS HE HAD TO CARRY THE SAD NEWS TO RAMA. MEANWHILE, INDRAJIT PROCEEDED TO THE TEMPLE OF NIKUMBHILA. IN RAMA'S CAMP -


WHILE WE WERE FIGHTING ON THE BATTLEFIELD, INDRAJIT KILLED SITA BEFORE OUR EYES. O RAMA, I HAVE COME TO BREAK THIS NEWS TO YOU.

UNABLE TO BEAR THE GRIEF, RAMA FAINTED.


OH NOBLE BROTHER, YOU HAVE BEEN IN EXILE, FAITHFUL TO THE PLEDGE OF YOUR FATHER...


...WHY SHOULD ONE LIKE YOU BE FACED WITH SO MANY CALAMITIES? OH RAMA, YOU FOLLOWED VIRTUE AND DHARMA BY GIVING UP THE KINGDOM WHICH YOUR FATHER HAD PROMISED TO YOU...


...BUT RENOUNCING WEALTH HAS EVIL RESULTS. FRIENDS, RELATIVES ALL GATHER AROUND HIM WHO HAS RICHES. HE ALONE IS FORTUNATE WHO HAS RICHES...
... RISE NOW, O HEROIC RAGHAVA! DEPEND ON MIGHT AS YOU NOW DEPEND ON VIRTUE. I SHALL FULLY AVENGE SITA'S KILLING TODAY! I SHALL COMPLETELY DESTROY LANKA ALONG WITH INDRAJIT AND RAVANA!
MEANWHILE, VIBHISHANA CAME UP AND HEARD THE NEWS FROM LAKSHMANA.
RAVANA WOULD NEVER ALLOW SITA TO BE KILLED! SURELY IT WAS ANOTHER OF INDRAJIT'S ILLUSIONS! HE MUST BE PERFORMING A SACRIFICE AT NIKUMBHILA RIGHT NOW.
UNLESS WE PREVENT HIM FROM COMPLETING THE RITUAL, HE WILL BECOME EVEN MORE DANGEROUS. LET LAKSHMANA ACCOMPANY ME AND MY ARMY. HE WILL PUT AN END TO THE SACRIFICE. THEN IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO KILL INDRAJIT.
SHAKE OFF YOUR GRIEF! IF SITA IS TO BE RECOVERED AND THE RAKSHASAS EXTERMINATED, YOU NEED TO MAKE AN ENERGETIC EFFORT. BRAHMA HAS ORDAINED THAT INDRAJIT WILL DIE IF HE IS ATTACKED AT NIKUMBHILA BEFORE COMPLETING A SACRIFICE.
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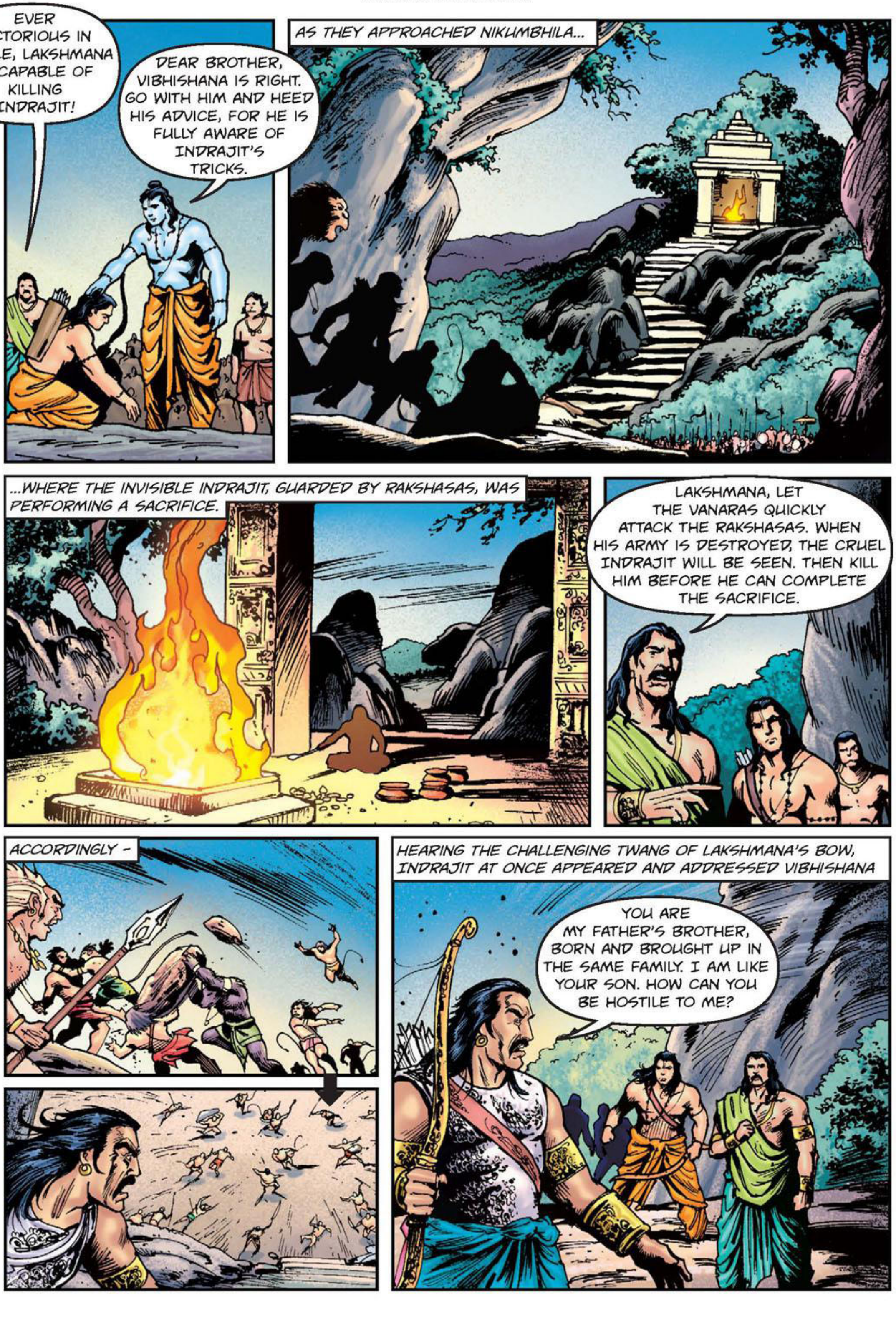
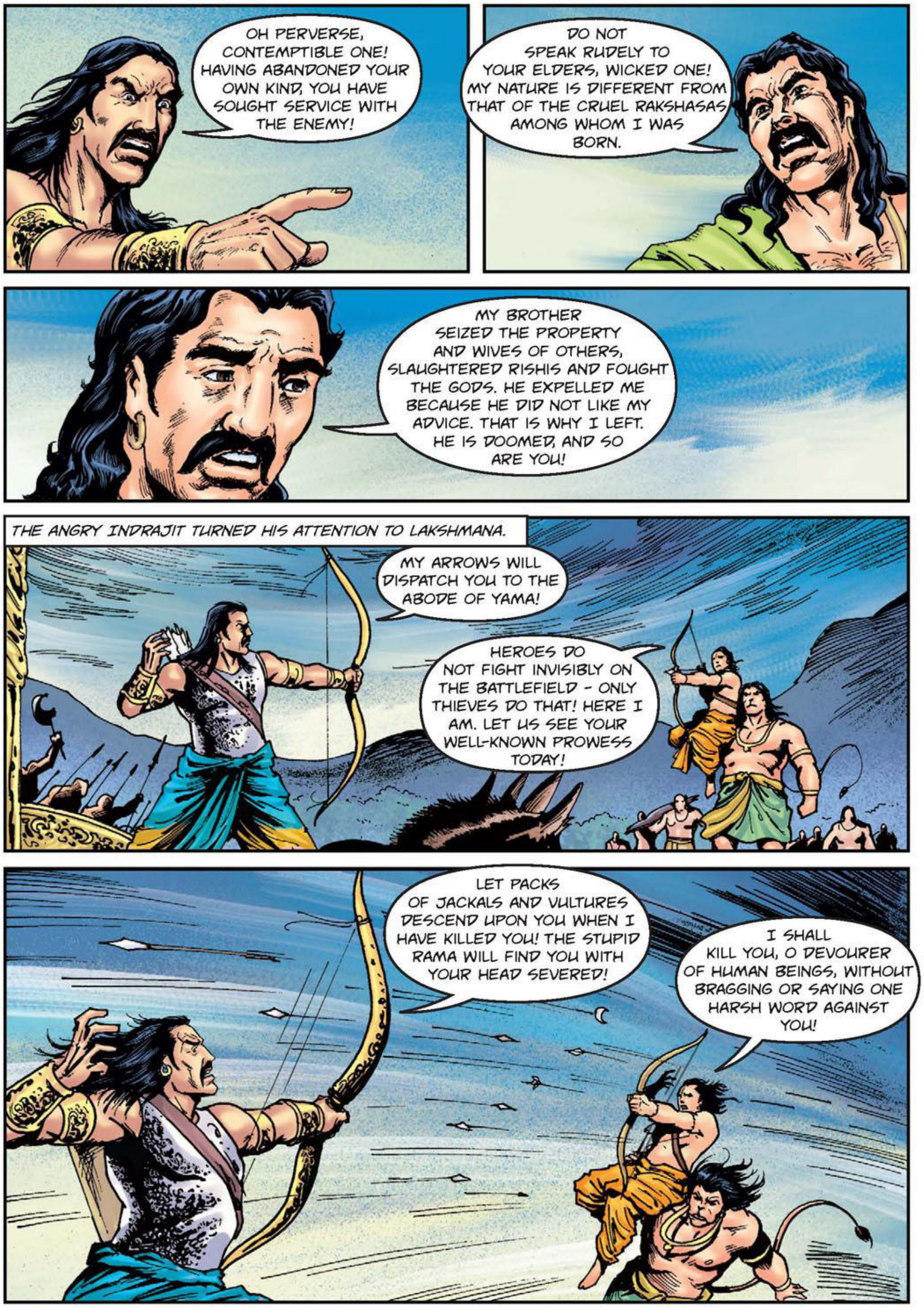
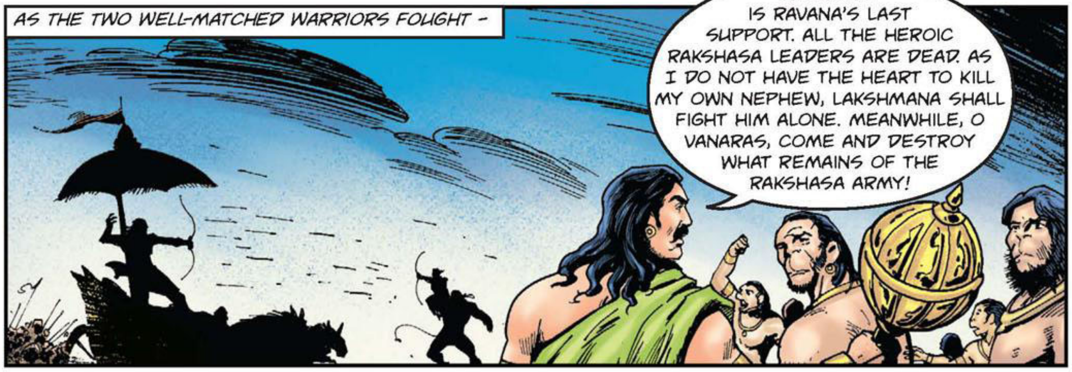
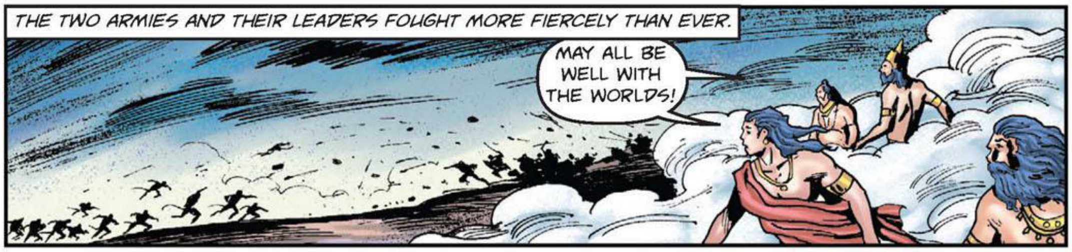

EVER VICTORIOUS IN BATTLE, LAKSHMANA IS CAPABLE OF KILLING INDRAJIT!
DEAR BROTHER, VIBHISHANA IS RIGHT. GO WITH HIM AND HEED HIS ADVICE, FOR HE IS FULLY AWARE OF INDRAJIT'S TRICKS.
AS THEY APPROACHED NIKUMBHILA...
...WHERE THE INVISIBLE INDRAJIT, GUARDED BY RAKSHASAS, WAS PERFORMING A SACRIFICE.
LAKSHMANA, LET THE VANARAS QUICKLY ATTACK THE RAKSHASAS. WHEN HIS ARMY IS DESTROYED, THE CRUEL INDRAJIT WILL BE SEEN. THEN KILL HIM BEFORE HE CAN COMPLETE THE SACRIFICE.
ACCORDINGLY -
HEARING THE CHALLENGING TWANG OF LAKSHMANA'S BOW, INDRAJIT AT ONCE APPEARED AND ADDRESSED VIBHISHANA
YOU ARE MY FATHER'S BROTHER, BORN AND BROUGHT UP IN THE SAME FAMILY. I AM LIKE YOUR SON. HOW CAN YOU BE HOSTILE TO ME?


OH PERVERSE, CONTEMPTIBLE ONE! HAVING ABANDONED YOUR OWN KIND, YOU HAVE SOUGHT SERVICE WITH THE ENEMY!
DO NOT SPEAK RUDELY TO YOUR ELDERS, WICKED ONE! MY NATURE IS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE CRUEL RAKSHASAS AMONG WHOM I WAS BORN.
MY BROTHER SEIZED THE PROPERTY AND WIVES OF OTHERS, SLAUGHTERED RISHIS AND FOUGHT THE GODS. HE EXPELLED ME BECAUSE HE DID NOT LIKE MY ADVICE. THAT IS WHY I LEFT. HE IS DOOMED, AND SO ARE YOU!
THE ANGRY INDRAJIT TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO LAKSHMANA.
MY ARROWS WILL DISPATCH YOU TO THE ABODE OF YAMA!
HEROES DO NOT FIGHT INVISIBLY ON THE BATTLEFIELD - ONLY THIEVES DO THAT! HERE I AM. LET US SEE YOUR WELL-KNOWN PROWESS TODAY!
LET PACKS OF JACKALS AND VULTURES DESCEND UPON YOU WHEN I HAVE KILLED YOU! THE STUPID RAMA WILL FIND YOU WITH YOUR HEAD SEVERED!
I SHALL KILL YOU, O DEVOURER OF HUMAN BEINGS, WITHOUT BRAGGING OR SAYING ONE HARSH WORD AGAINST YOU!



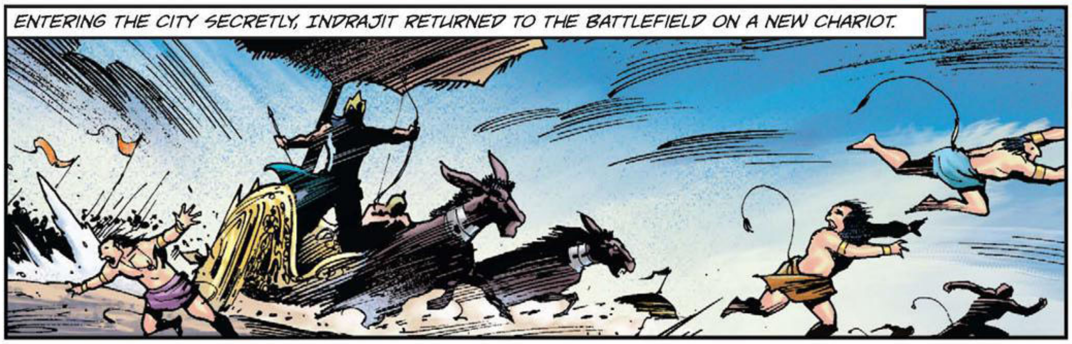
AS THE TWO WELL-MATCHED WARRIORS FOUGHT –

INDRAJIT IS RAVANA'S LAST SUPPORT. ALL THE HEROIC RAKSHASA LEADERS ARE DEAD. AS I DO NOT HAVE THE HEART TO KILL MY OWN NEPHEW, LAKSHMANA SHALL FIGHT HIM ALONE. MEANWHILE, O VANARAS, COME AND DESTROY WHAT REMAINS OF THE RAKSHASA ARMY!

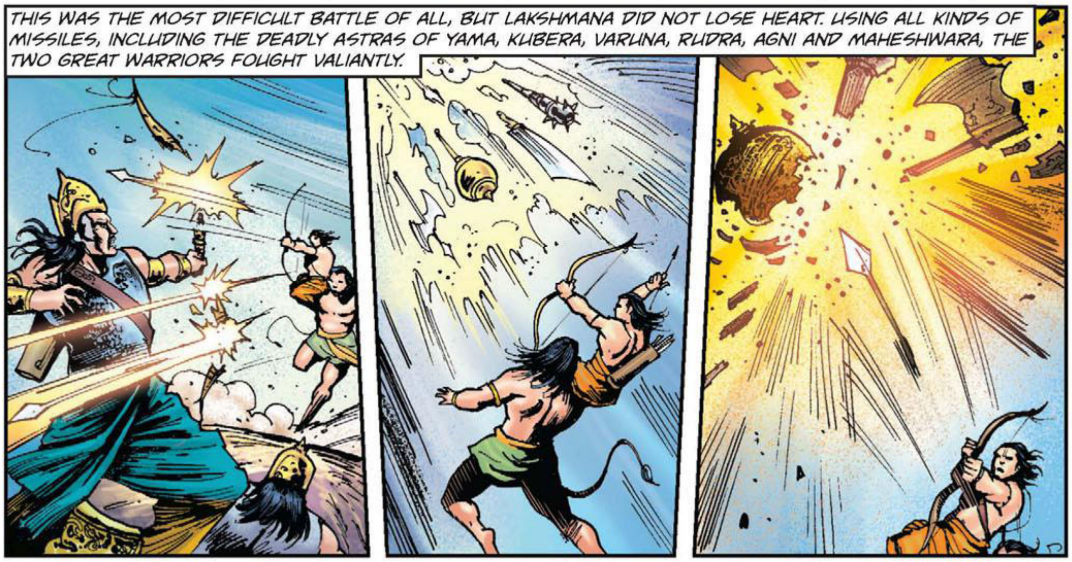


THE TWO ARMIES AND THEIR LEADERS FOUGHT MORE FIERCELY THAN EVER.

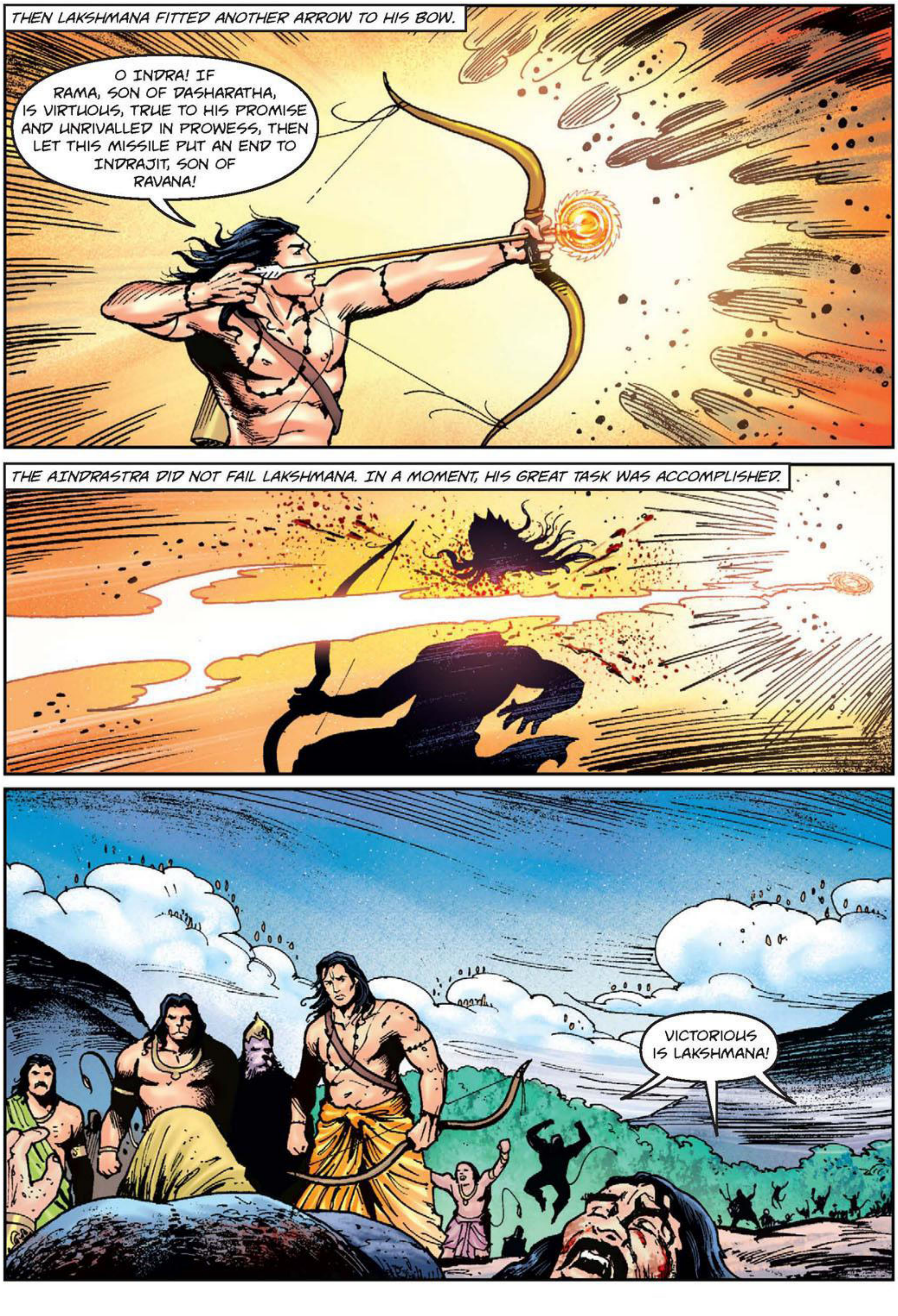
MAY ALL BE WELL WITH THE WORLDS!



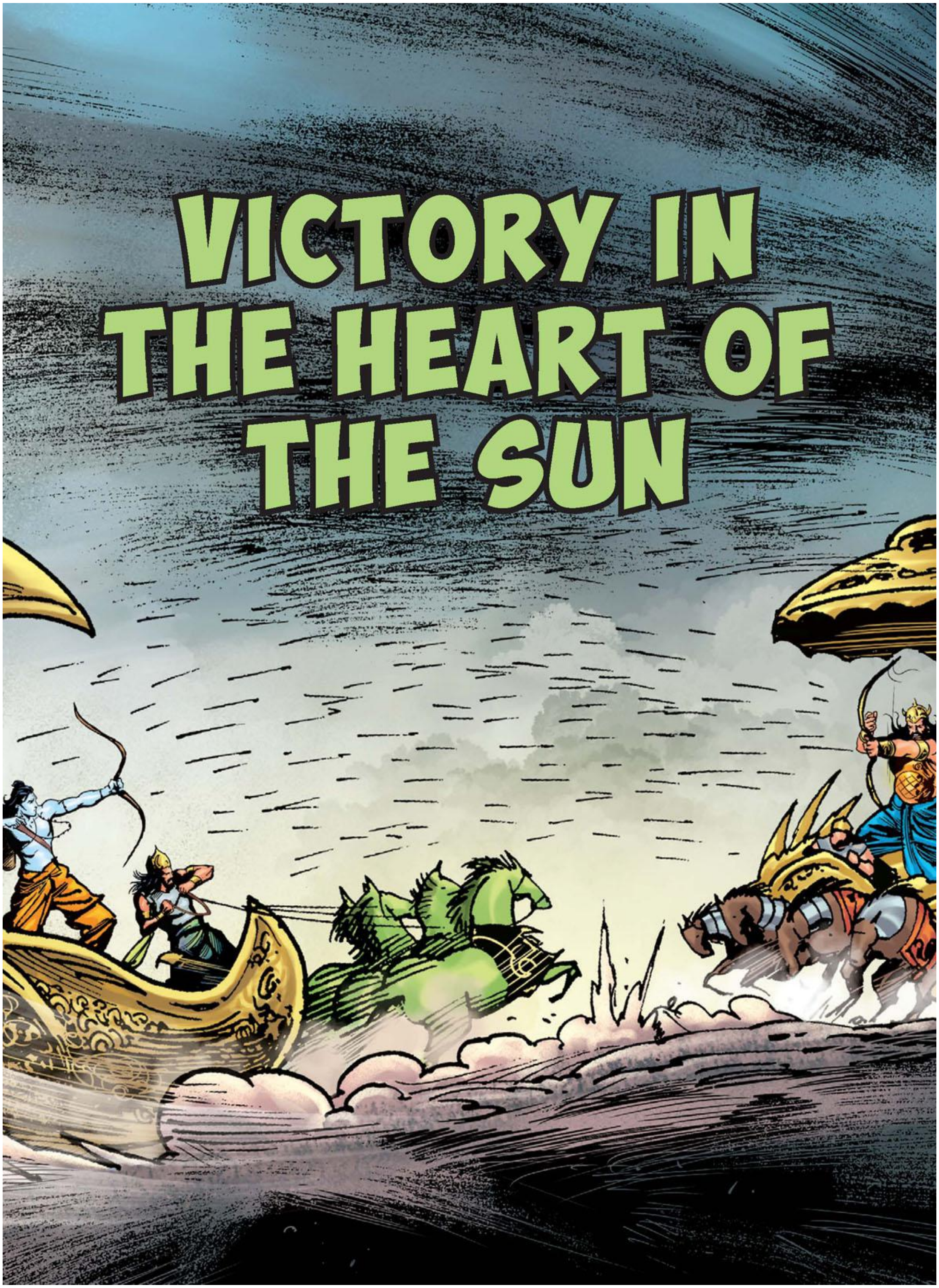
ENTERING THE CITY SECRETLY, INDRAJIT RETURNED TO THE BATTLEFIELD ON A NEW CHARIOT.

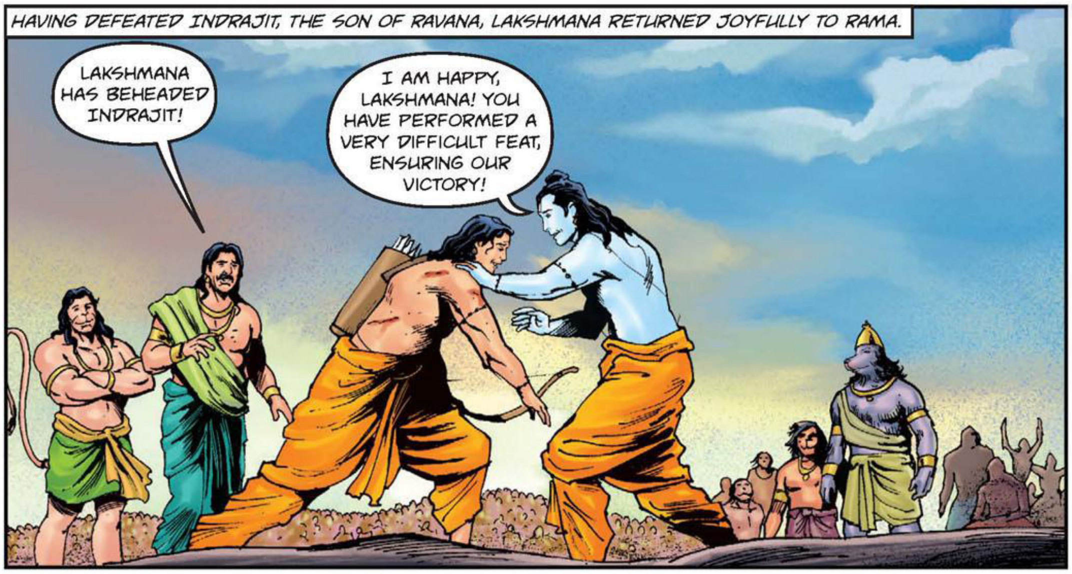


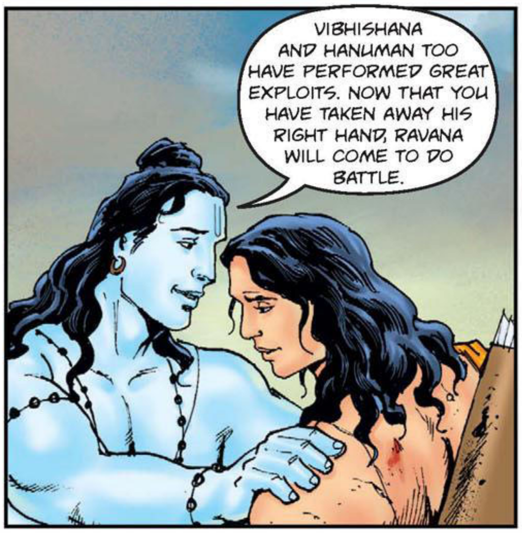
THIS WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT BATTLE OF ALL, BUT LAKSHMANA DID NOT LOSE HEART. USING ALL KINDS OF MISSILES, INCLUDING THE DEADLY ASTRAS OF YAMA, KUBERA, VARUNA, RUDRA, AGNI AND MAHESHWARA, THE TWO GREAT WARRIORS FOUGHT VALIANTLY.

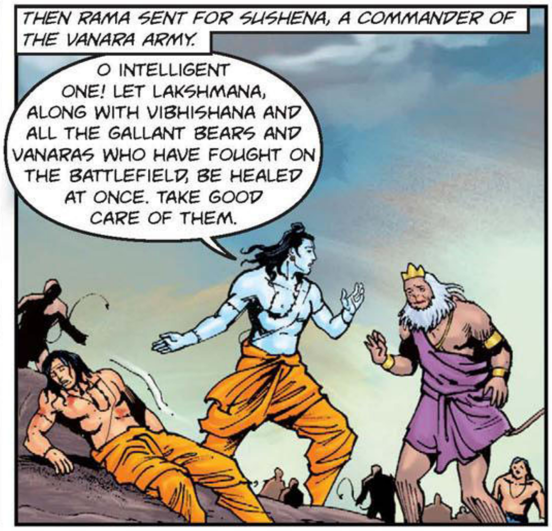

THEN LAKSHMANA FITTED ANOTHER ARROW TO HIS BOW.
O INDRA! IF RAMA, SON OF DASHARATHA, IS VIRTUOUS, TRUE TO HIS PROMISE AND UNRIVALLED IN PROWESS, THEN LET THIS MISSILE PUT AN END TO INDRAJIT, SON OF RAVANA!
THE AINDRASTRA DID NOT FAIL LAKSHMANA. IN A MOMENT, HIS GREAT TASK WAS ACCOMPLISHED.
VICTORIOUS IS LAKSHMANA!

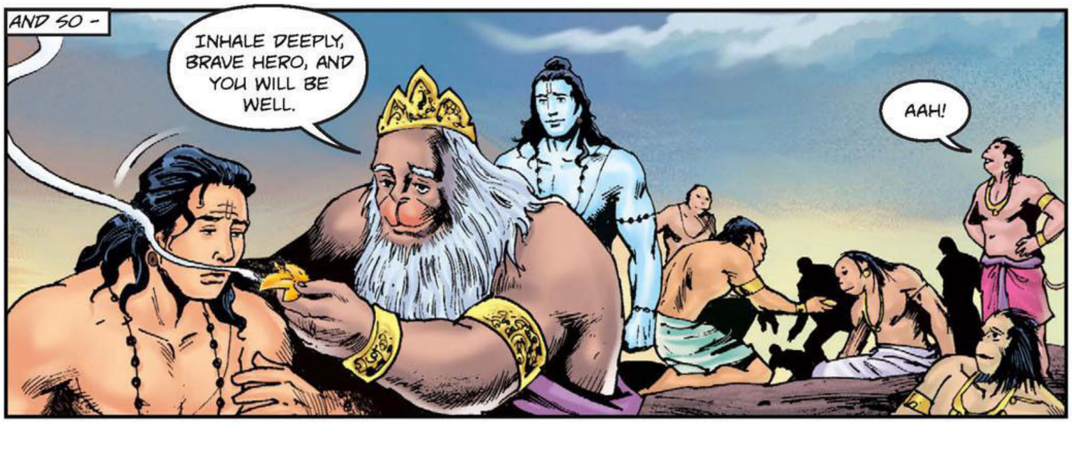
VICTORY IN THE HEART OF THE SUN

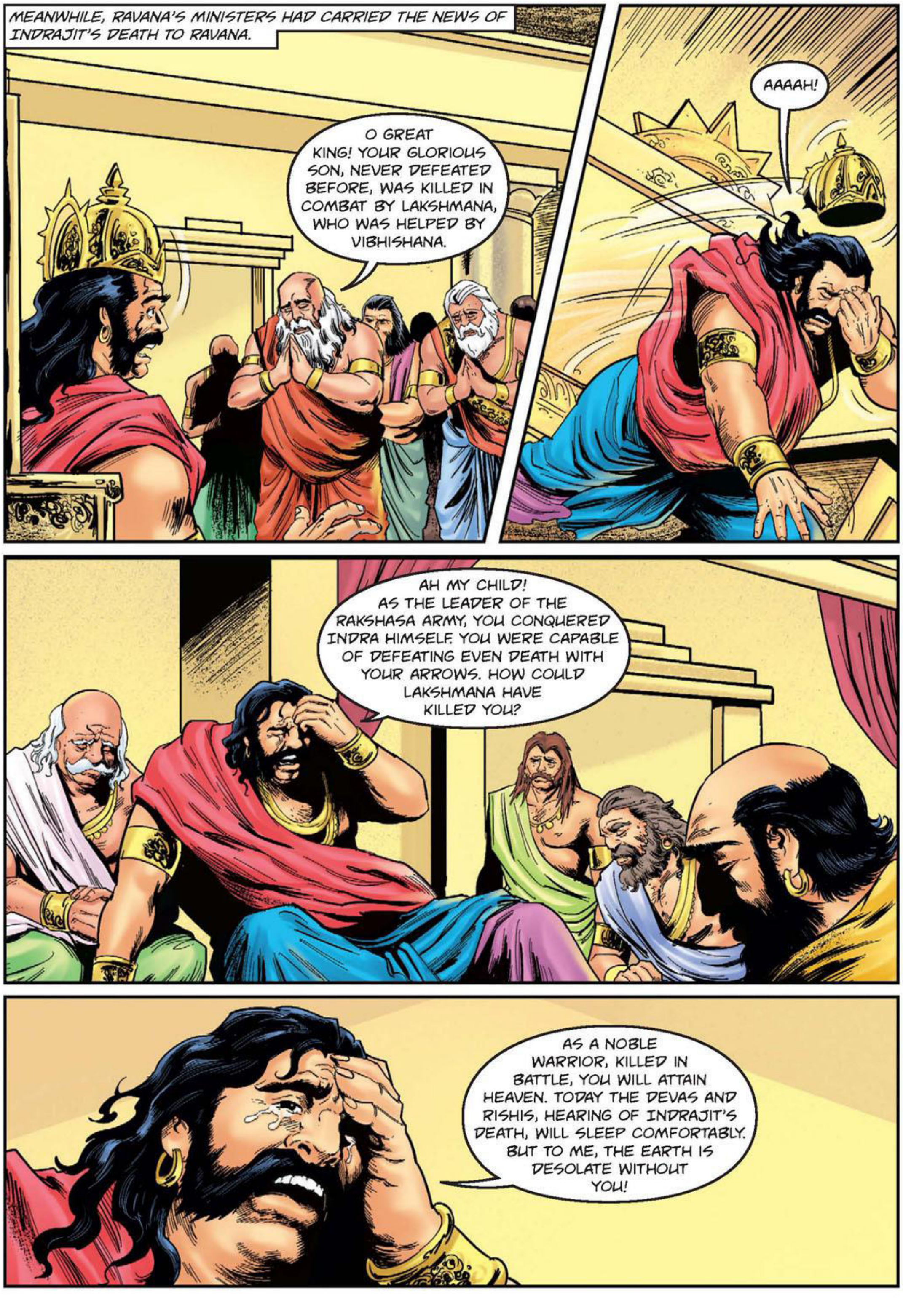


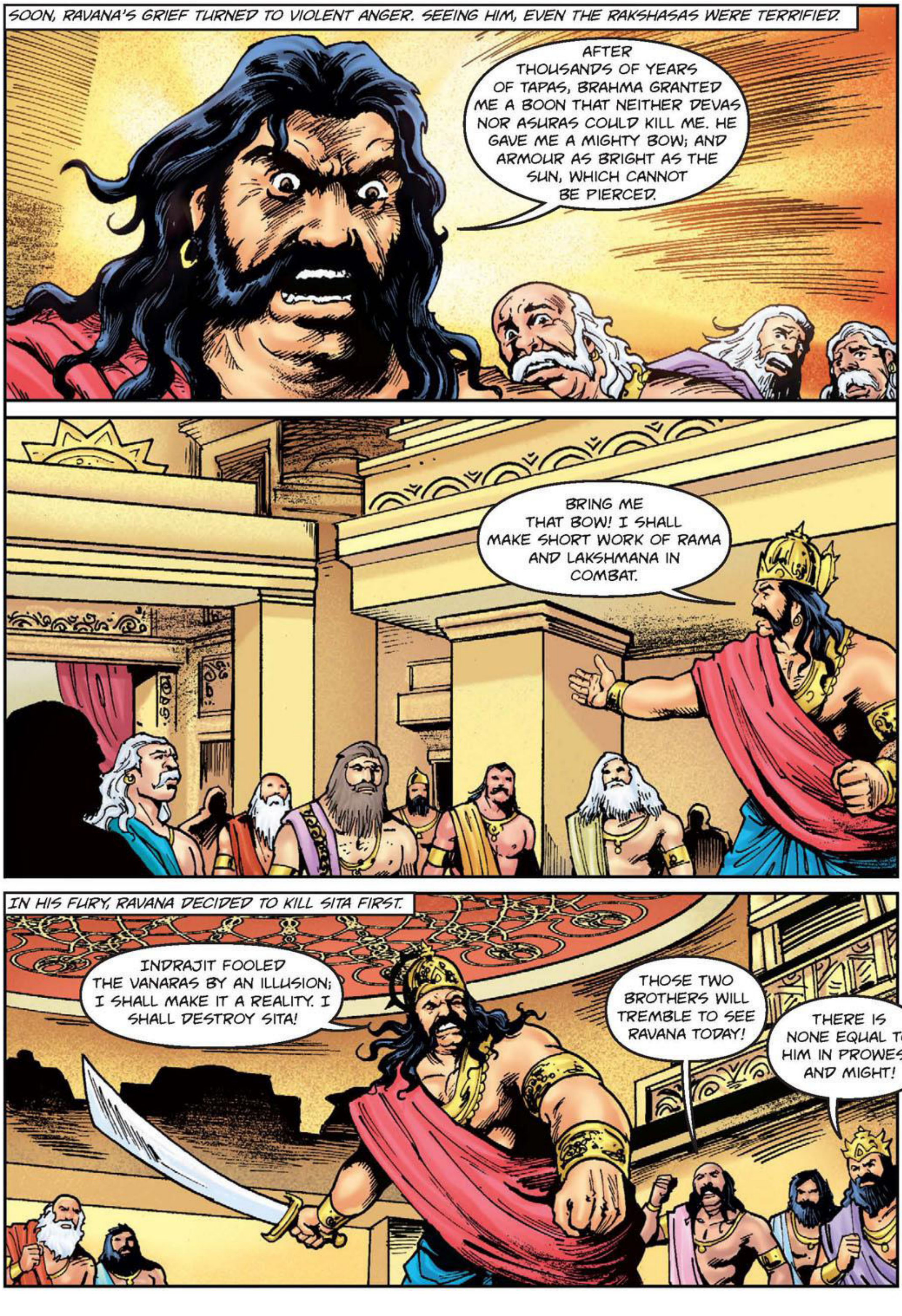

HAVING DEFEATED INDRAJIT, THE SON OF RAVANA, LAKSHMANA RETURNED JOYFULLY TO RAMA.
LAKSHMANA HAS BEHEADED INDRAJIT!
I AM HAPPY, LAKSHMANA! YOU HAVE PERFORMED A VERY DIFFICULT FEAT, ENSURING OUR VICTORY!


VIBHISHANA AND HANUMAN TOO HAVE PERFORMED GREAT EXPLOITS. NOW THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN AWAY HIS RIGHT HAND, RAVANA WILL COME TO DO BATTLE.

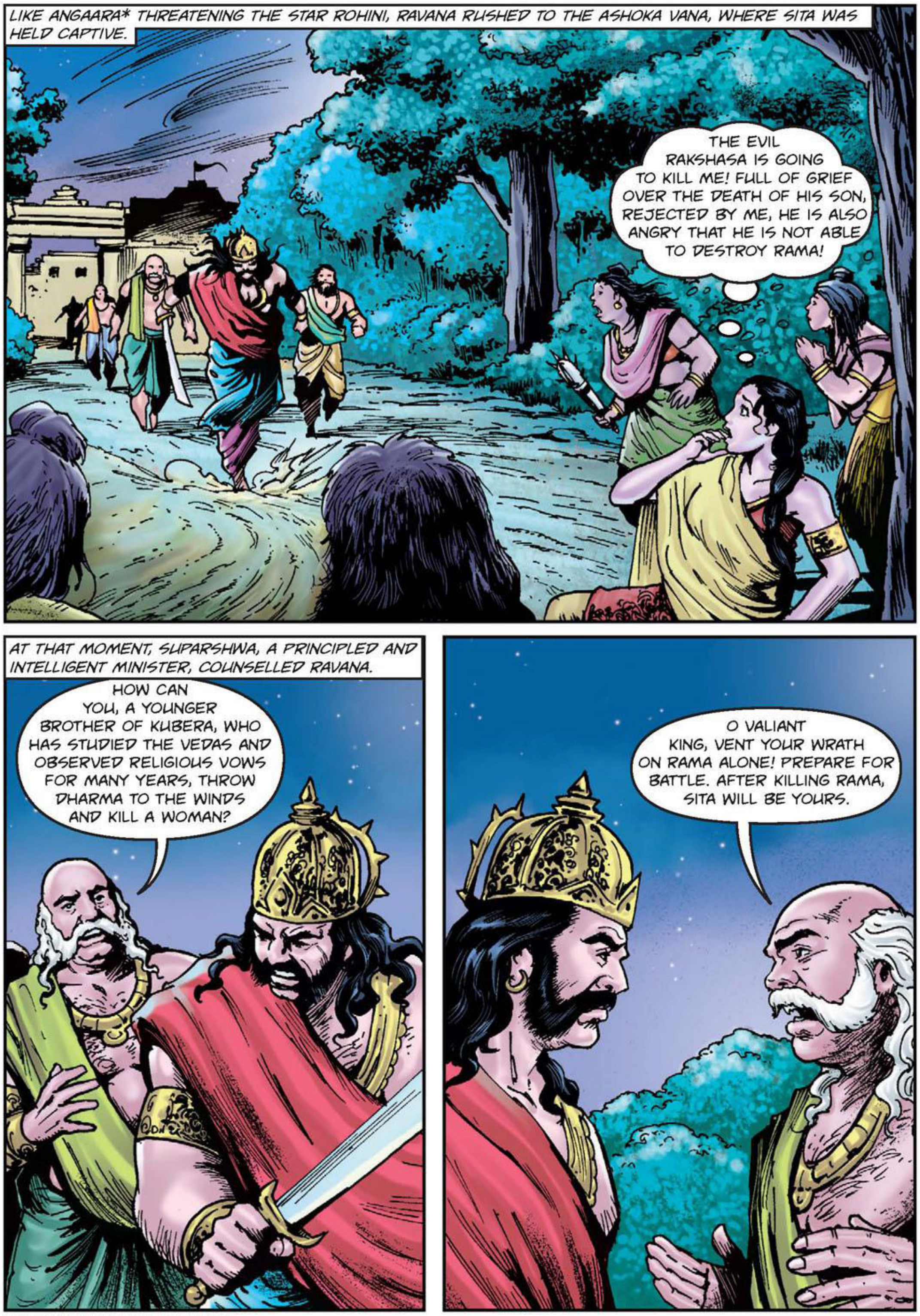

THEN RAMA SENT FOR SUSHENA, A COMMANDER OF THE VANARA ARMY.
O INTELLIGENT ONE! LET LAKSHMANA, ALONG WITH VIBHISHANA AND ALL THE GALLANT BEARS AND VANARAS WHO HAVE FOUGHT ON THE BATTLEFIELD, BE HEALED AT ONCE. TAKE GOOD CARE OF THEM.


AND SO -
INHALE DEEPLY, BRAVE HERO, AND YOU WILL BE WELL.
AAH!


MEANWHILE, RAVANA'S MINISTERS HAD CARRIED THE NEWS OF INDRAJIT'S DEATH TO RAVANA.
O GREAT KING! YOUR GLORIOUS SON, NEVER DEFEATED BEFORE, WAS KILLED IN COMBAT BY LAKSHMANA, WHO WAS HELPED BY VIBHISHANA.
AAAAH!
AH MY CHILD! AS THE LEADER OF THE RAKSHASA ARMY, YOU CONQUERED INDRA HIMSELF. YOU WERE CAPABLE OF DEFEATING EVEN DEATH WITH YOUR ARROWS. HOW COULD LAKSHMANA HAVE KILLED YOU?
AS A NOBLE WARRIOR, KILLED IN BATTLE, YOU WILL ATTAIN HEAVEN. TODAY THE DEVAS AND RISHIS, HEARING OF INDRAJIT'S DEATH, WILL SLEEP COMFORTABLY. BUT TO ME, THE EARTH IS DESOLATE WITHOUT YOU!


SOON, RAVANA'S GRIEF TURNED TO VIOLENT ANGER. SEEING HIM, EVEN THE RAKSHASAS WERE TERRIFIED.
AFTER THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF TAPAS, BRAHMA GRANTED ME A BOON THAT NEITHER DEVAS NOR ASURAS COULD KILL ME. HE GAVE ME A MIGHTY BOW; AND ARMOUR AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN, WHICH CANNOT BE PIERCED.
BRING ME THAT BOW! I SHALL MAKE SHORT WORK OF RAMA AND LAKSHMANA IN COMBAT.
IN HIS FURY, RAVANA DECIDED TO KILL SITA FIRST.
INDRAJIT FOOLED THE VANARAS BY AN ILLUSION; I SHALL MAKE IT A REALITY. I SHALL DESTROY SITA!
THOSE TWO BROTHERS WILL TREMBLE TO SEE RAVANA TODAY!
THERE IS NONE EQUAL TO HIM IN PROWESS AND MIGHT!

LIKE ANGAARA* THREATENING THE STAR ROHINI, RAVANA RUSHED TO THE ASHOKA VANA, WHERE SITA WAS HELD CAPTIVE.


THE EVIL RAKSHASA IS GOING TO KILL ME! FULL OF GRIEF OVER THE DEATH OF HIS SON, REJECTED BY ME, HE IS ALSO ANGRY THAT HE IS NOT ABLE TO DESTROY RAMA!
HOW CAN YOU, A YOUNGER BROTHER OF KUBERA, WHO HAS STUDIED THE VEDAS AND OBSERVED RELIGIOUS VOWS FOR MANY YEARS, THROW DHARMA TO THE WINDS AND KILL A WOMAN?
O VALIANT KING, VENT YOUR WRATH ON RAMA ALONE! PREPARE FOR BATTLE. AFTER KILLING RAMA, SITA WILL BE YOURS.

AT THAT MOMENT, SUPARSHWA, A PRINCIPLED AND INTELLIGENT MINISTER, COUNSELLED RAVANA.

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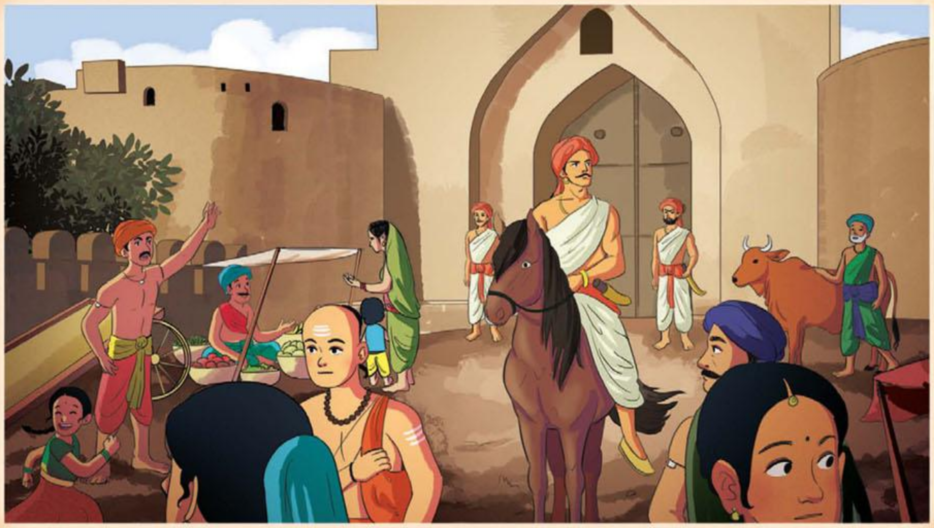
*ANOTHER NAME FOR MARS

KSHATRIYA DHARMA

In ancient India, society was organized into four groups according to the type of work they did. The duties of the Kshatriyas included protecting the kingdom and its people, as well as conquering new areas. They were the warriors, leaders and kings in society. Rama was a Kshatriya. Ravana too was a king and a warrior by profession, though his father was a Brahmin.

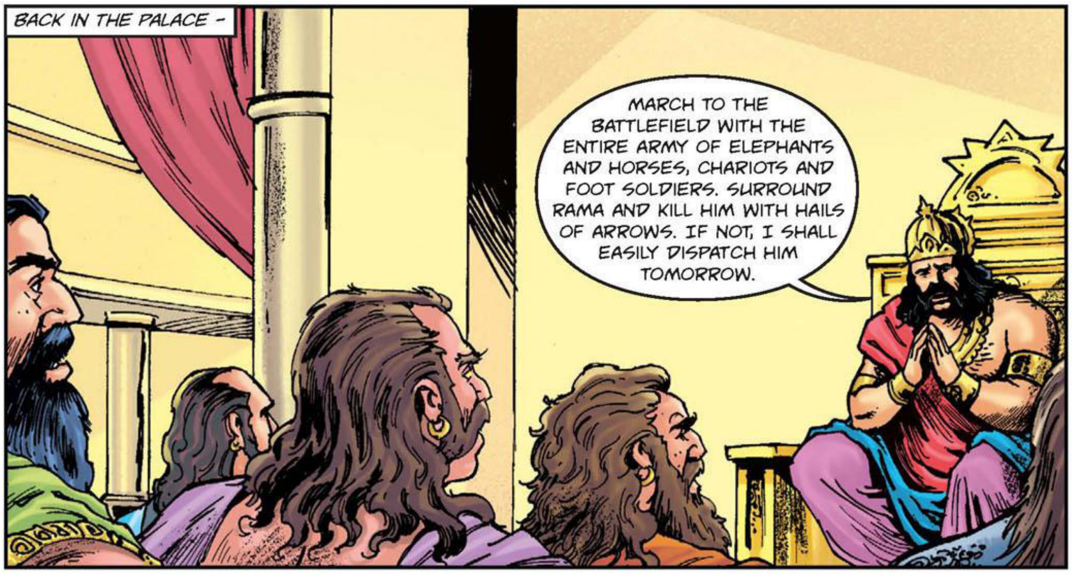


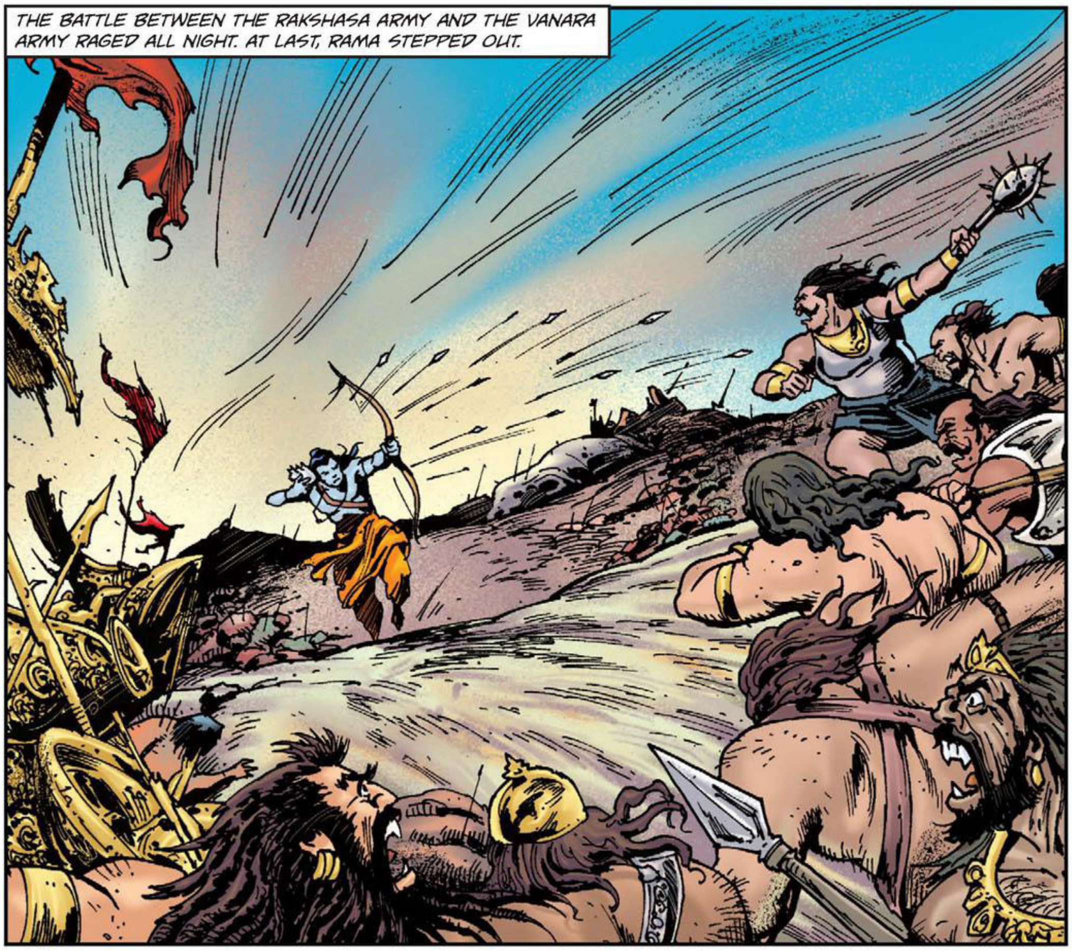
The science of warfare was carefully studied and followed by the Kshatriyas or warriors. We can find information about warfare, weapons, military practices, mantras and rituals in the Dharma Shastras, the Atharva Veda, and the Dharma Sutras.

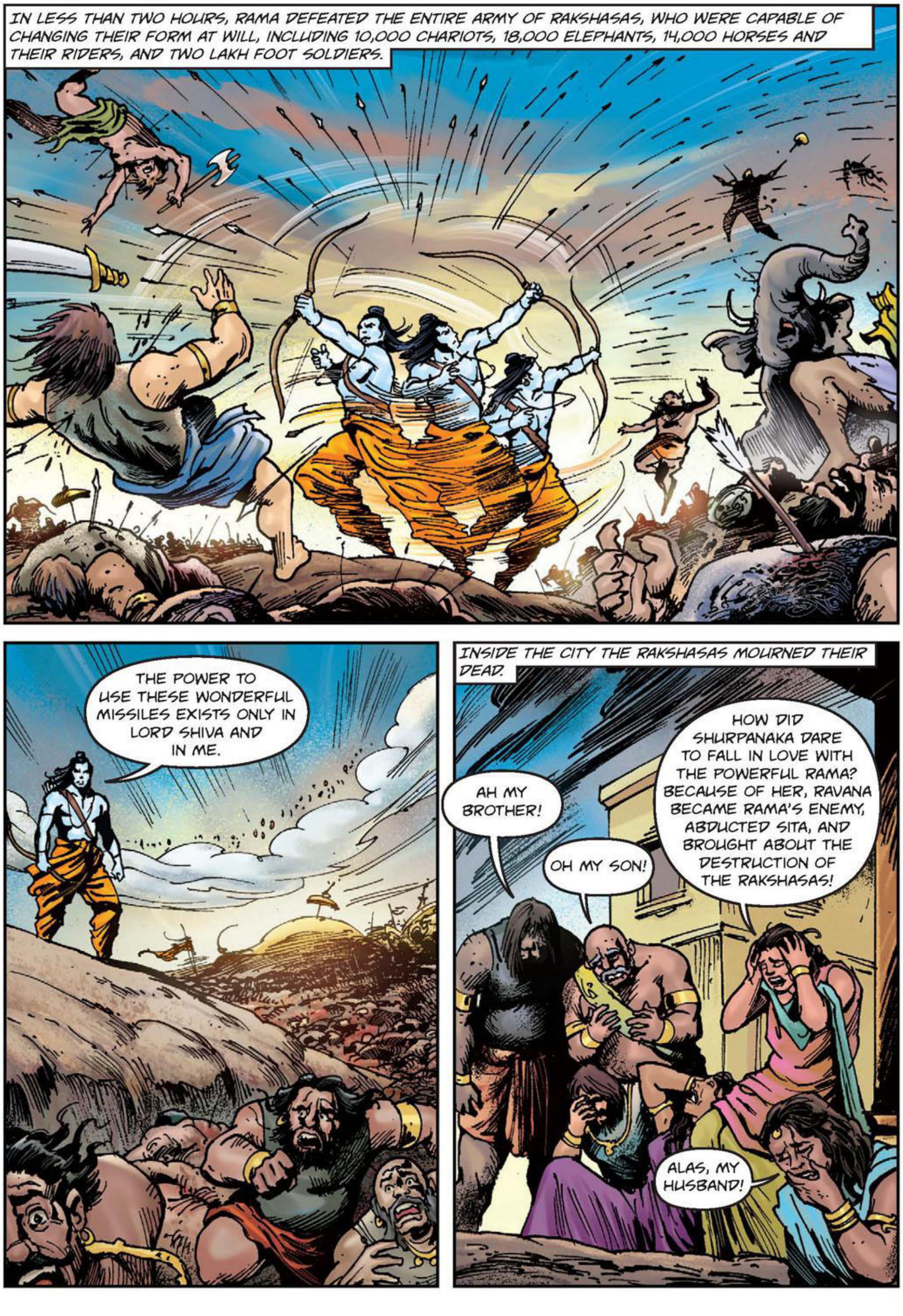
When a king became powerful, he would send ambassadors to neighbouring kingdoms with the message: Fight or submit. Those who submitted would be treated with honour and allowed to rule their own kingdoms, while those who refused were conquered. Kings would also perform Ashwamedha Yagnas, in which a horse was set loose to wander all over the kingdom and surrounding areas. If anyone interfered with the horse, it was a challenge to the supremacy of the king, and he would have to fight with the soldiers who accompanied the horse on its travels.

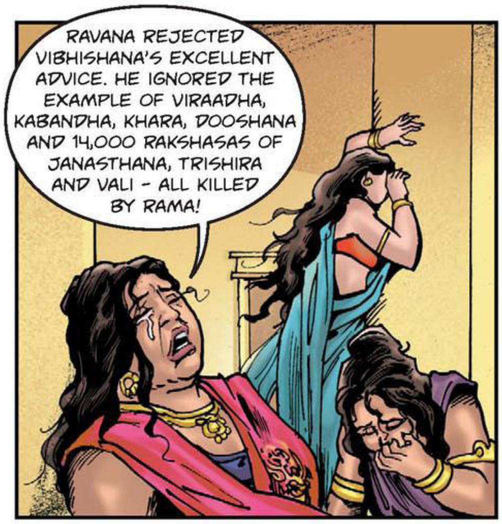
Kshatriya heroes often became famous and wealthy, leading lives of luxury. It was believed that if they died in battle, they would go straight to a special heaven for heroes. But if they did not follow the Kshatriya dharma, they would go to hell. Kshatriya dharma included rules of chivalry such as:

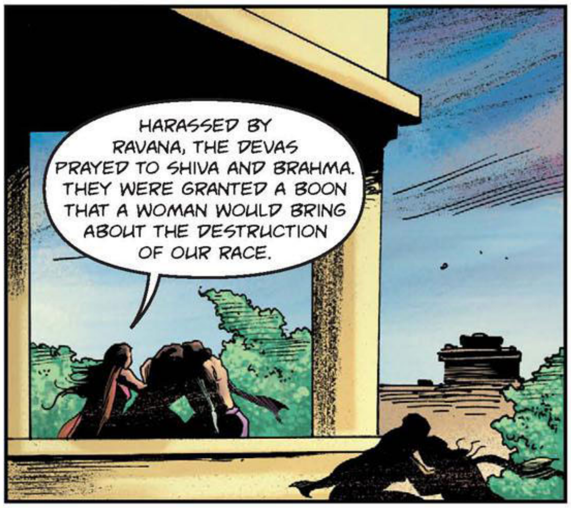
- An armed warrior should not fight with an unarmed one.
- Women, children, old men, farmers and other civilians should not be harmed.
- An enemy who surrenders should be shown mercy.
- A messenger should never be killed.

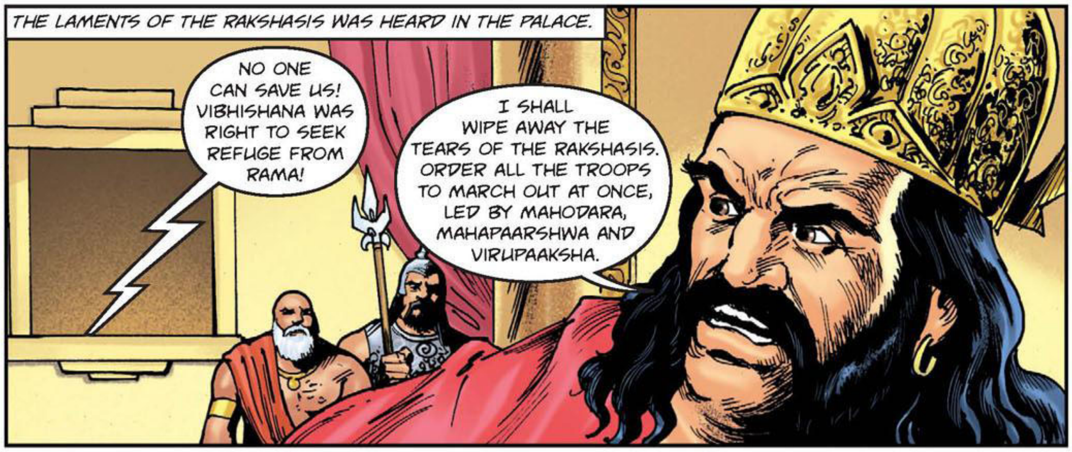

BACK IN THE PALACE -
MARCH TO THE BATTLEFIELD WITH THE ENTIRE ARMY OF ELEPHANTS AND HORSES, CHARIOTS AND FOOT SOLDIERS. SURROUND RAMA AND KILL HIM WITH HAILS OF ARROWS. IF NOT, I SHALL EASILY DISPATCH HIM TOMORROW.

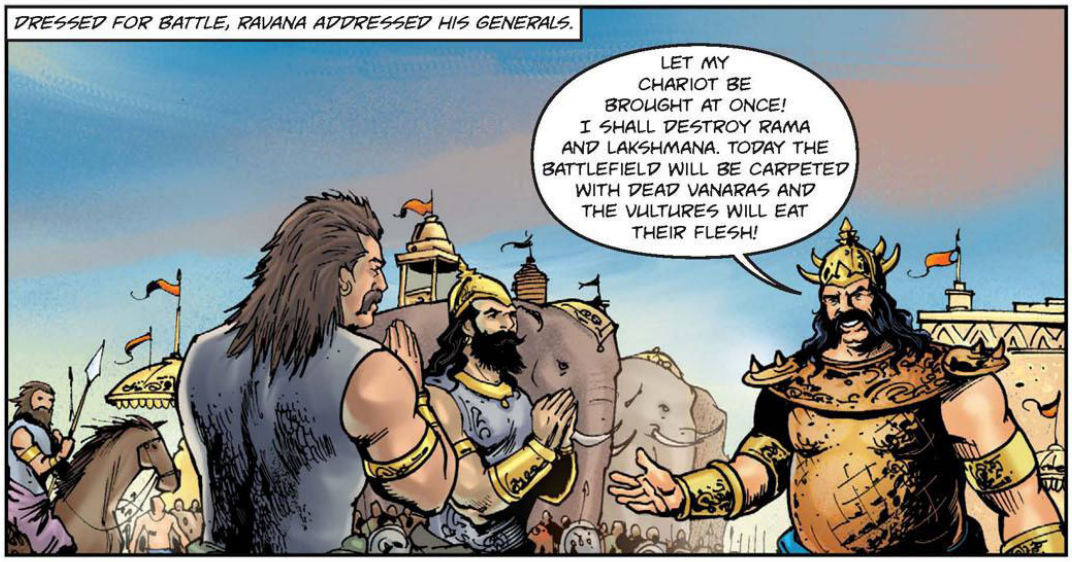

THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE RAKSHASA ARMY AND THE VANARA ARMY RAGED ALL NIGHT. AT LAST, RAMA STEPPED OUT.


IN LESS THAN TWO HOURS, RAMA DEFEATED THE ENTIRE ARMY OF RAKSHASAS, WHO WERE CAPABLE OF CHANGING THEIR FORM AT WILL, INCLUDING 10,000 CHARIOTS, 18,000 ELEPHANTS, 14,000 HORSES AND THEIR RIDERS, AND TWO LAKH FOOT SOLDIERS.
THE POWER TO USE THESE WONDERFUL MISSILES EXISTS ONLY IN LORD SHIVA AND IN ME.
INSIDE THE CITY THE RAKSHASAS MOURNED THEIR DEAD.
AH MY BROTHER!
OH MY SON!
HOW DID SHURPANAKA DARE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THE POWERFUL RAMA? BECAUSE OF HER, RAVANA BECAME RAMA'S ENEMY, ABDUCTED SITA, AND BROUGHT ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE RAKSHASAS!
ALAS, MY HUSBAND!

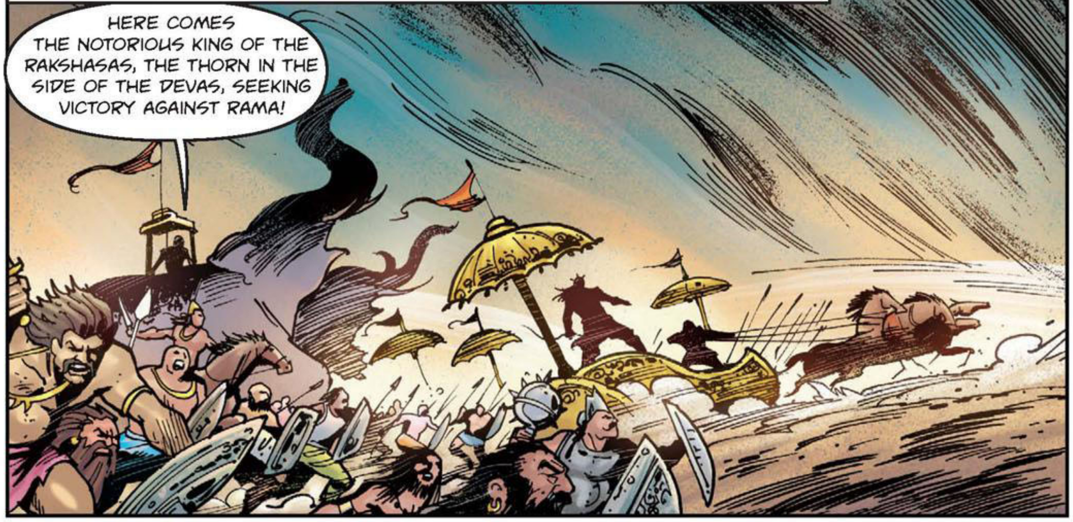

RAVANA REJECTED VIBHISHANA'S EXCELLENT ADVICE. HE IGNORED THE EXAMPLE OF VIRAADHA, KABANDHA, KHARA, DOOSHANA AND 14,000 RAKSHASAS OF JANASTHANA, TRISHIRA AND VALI - ALL KILLED BY RAMA!


HARASSED BY RAVANA, THE DEVAS PRAYED TO SHIVA AND BRAHMA. THEY WERE GRANTED A BOON THAT A WOMAN WOULD BRING ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR RACE.

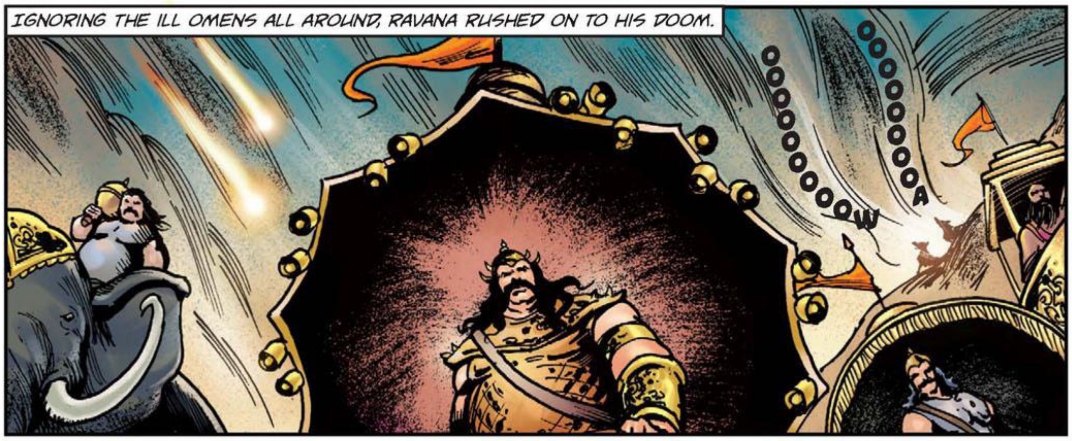

THE LAMENTS OF THE RAKSHASIS WAS HEARD IN THE PALACE.
NO ONE CAN SAVE US! VIBHISHANA WAS RIGHT TO SEEK REFUGE FROM RAMA!
I SHALL WIPE AWAY THE TEARS OF THE RAKSHASIS. ORDER ALL THE TROOPS TO MARCH OUT AT ONCE, LED BY MAHODARA, MAHAPAARSHWA AND VIRUPAAKSHA.


DRESSED FOR BATTLE, RAVANA ADDRESSED HIS GENERALS.
LET MY CHARIOT BE BROUGHT AT ONCE! I SHALL DESTROY RAMA AND LAKSHMANA. TODAY THE BATTLEFIELD WILL BE CARPETED WITH DEAD VANARAS AND THE VULTURES WILL EAT THEIR FLESH!

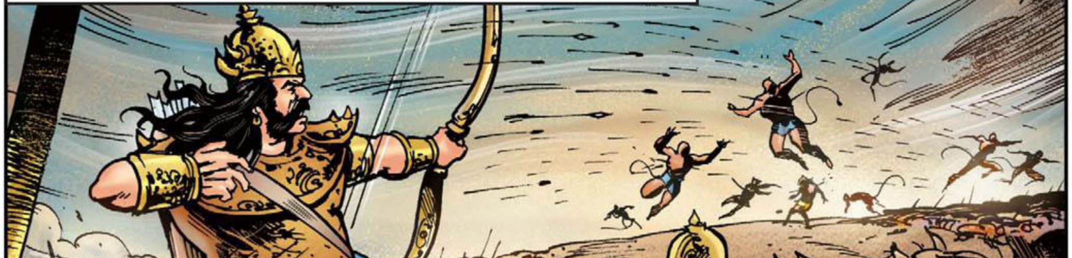
RAVANA LEFT THE CITY, ACCOMPANIED BY MORE THAN ONE LAKH CHARIOTS, THREE LAKH ELEPHANTS, SIX CRORE HORSES, THE SAME NUMBER OF MULES, AND INNUMERABLE FOOT SOLDIERS.


HERE COMES THE NOTORIOUS KING OF THE RAKSHASAS, THE THORN IN THE SIDE OF THE DEVAS, SEEKING VICTORY AGAINST RAMA!

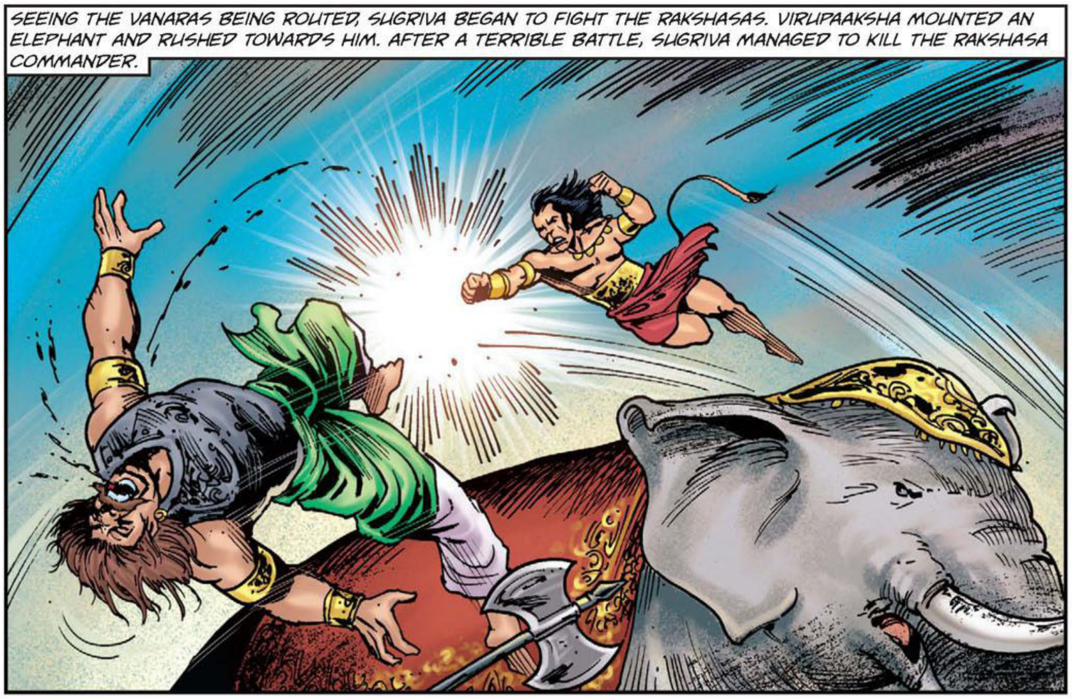
IGNORING THE ILL OMENS ALL AROUND, RAVANA RUSHED ON TO HIS DOOM.

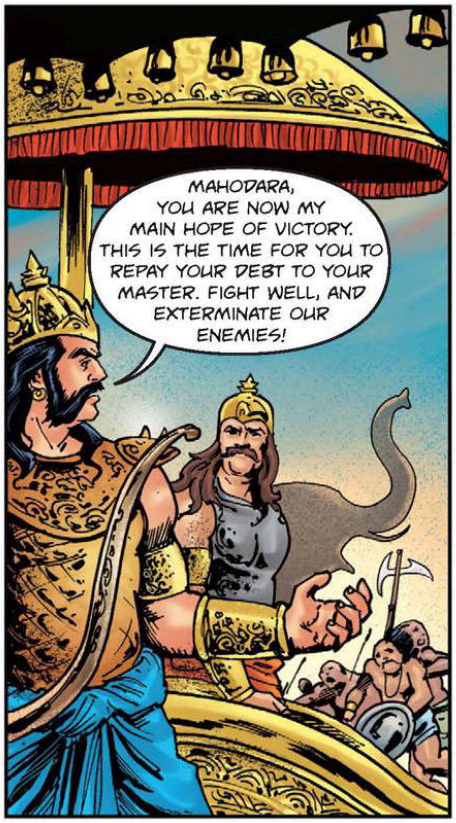

OOOOOOOOOW
OOOOOOOOA

AT THE SOUND OF THE APPROACHING CHARIOT WHEELS, THE VANARA ARMY GOT READY FOR BATTLE. RAVANA PLAYED HAVOC AMONG THE VANARAS WITH HIS GOLD-DECKED ARROWS.

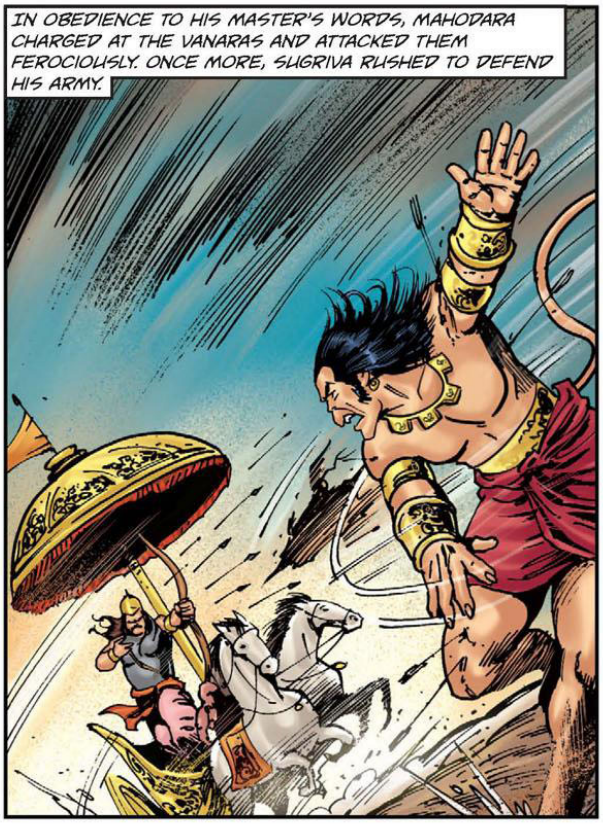


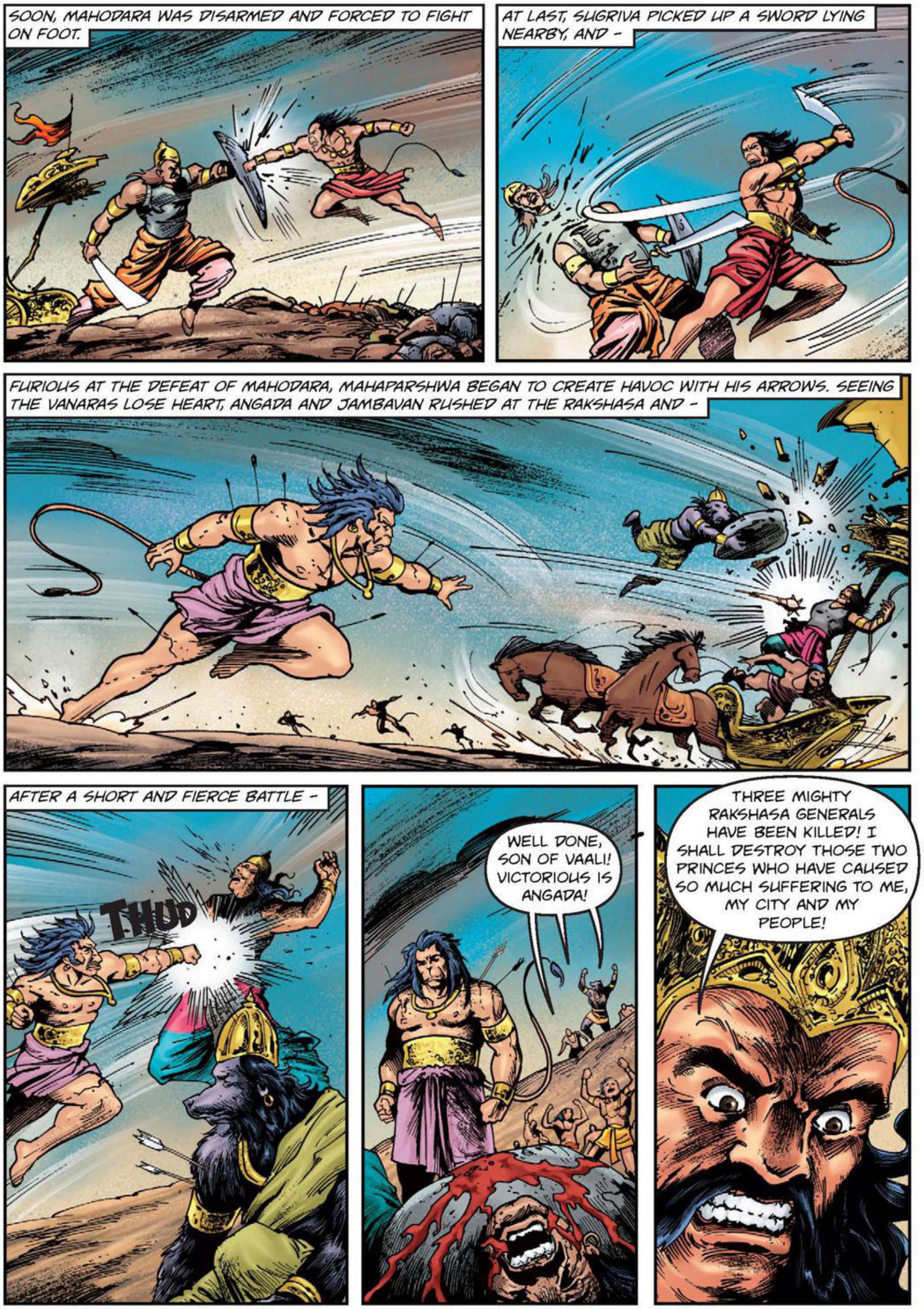
SEEING THE VANARAS BEING ROUTED, SUGRIVA BEGAN TO FIGHT THE RAKSHASAS. VIRUPAAKSHA MOUNTED AN ELEPHANT AND RUSHED TOWARDS HIM. AFTER A TERRIBLE BATTLE, SUGRIVA MANAGED TO KILL THE RAKSHASA COMMANDER.



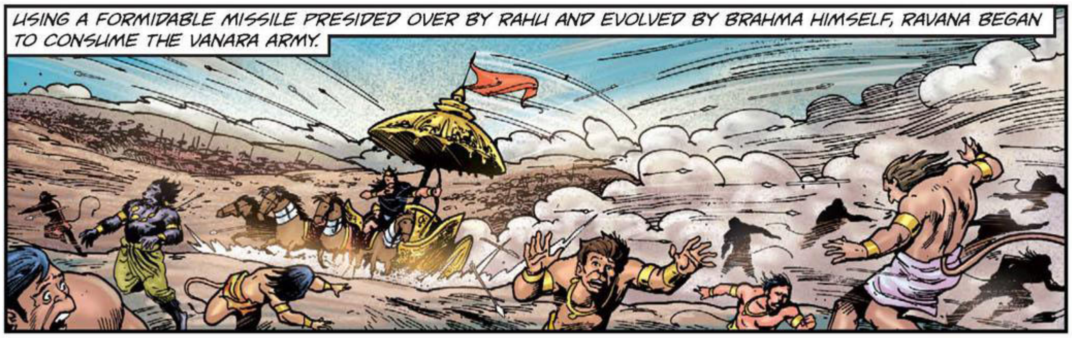

MAHODARA, YOU ARE NOW MY MAIN HOPE OF VICTORY. THIS IS THE TIME FOR YOU TO REPAY YOUR DEBT TO YOUR MASTER. FIGHT WELL, AND EXTERMINATE OUR ENEMIES!

IN OBEDIENCE TO HIS MASTER'S WORDS, MAHODARA CHARGED AT THE VANARAS AND ATTACKED THEM FEROCIOUSLY. ONCE MORE, SUGRIVA RUSHED TO DEFEND HIS ARMY.

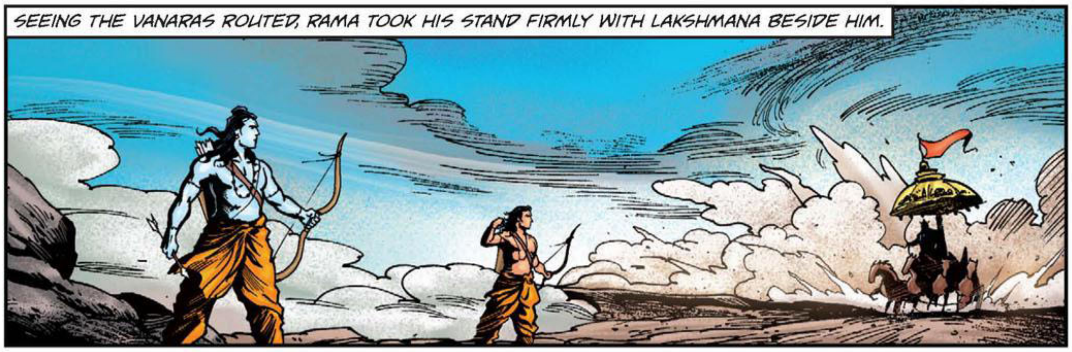



SOON, MAHODARA WAS DISARMED AND FORCED TO FIGHT ON FOOT.
AT LAST, SUGRIVA PICKED UP A SWORD LYING NEARBY, AND -
FURIOUS AT THE DEFEAT OF MAHODARA, MAHAPARSHWA BEGAN TO CREATE HAVOC WITH HIS ARROWS. SEEING THE VANARAS LOSE HEART, ANGADA AND JAMBAVAN RUSHED AT THE RAKSHASA AND -
AFTER A SHORT AND FIERCE BATTLE -
THUD
WELL DONE, SON OF VAALI! VICTORIOUS IS ANGADA!
THREE MIGHTY RAKSHASA GENERALS HAVE BEEN KILLED! I SHALL DESTROY THOSE TWO PRINCES WHO HAVE CAUSED SO MUCH SUFFERING TO ME, MY CITY AND MY PEOPLE!

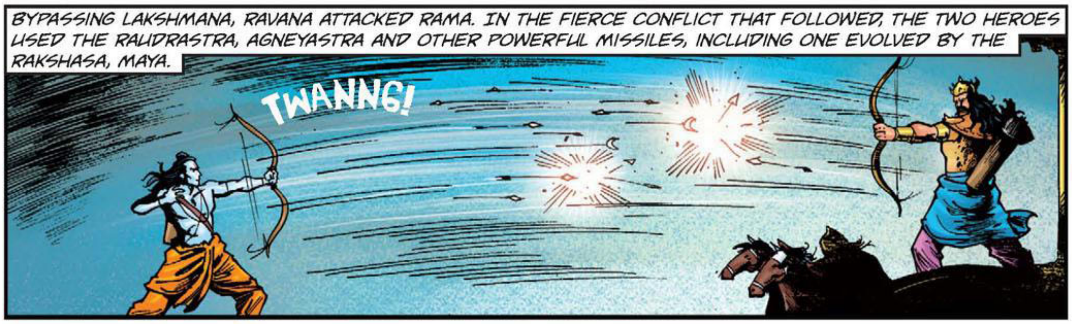
USING A FORMIDABLE MISSILE PRESIDED OVER BY RAHU AND EVOLVED BY BRAHMA HIMSELF, RAVANA BEGAN TO CONSUME THE VANARA ARMY.

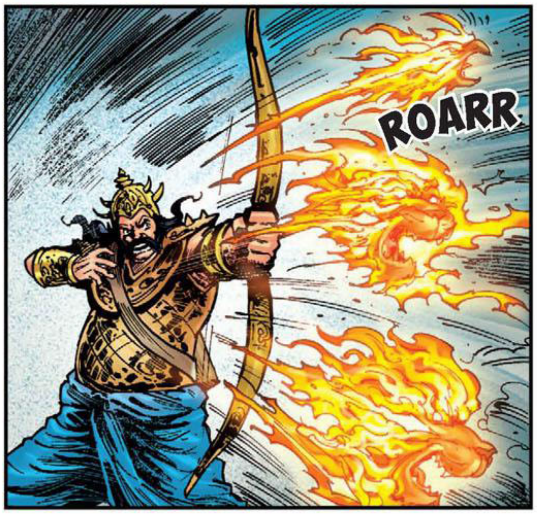


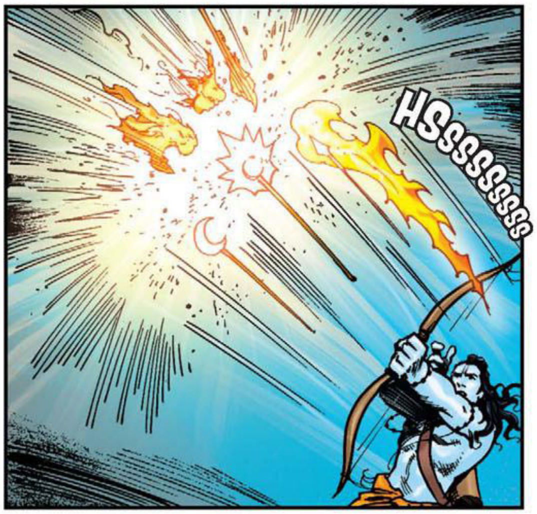
SEEING THE VANARAS ROUTED, RAMA TOOK HIS STAND FIRMLY WITH LAKSHMANA BESIDE HIM.

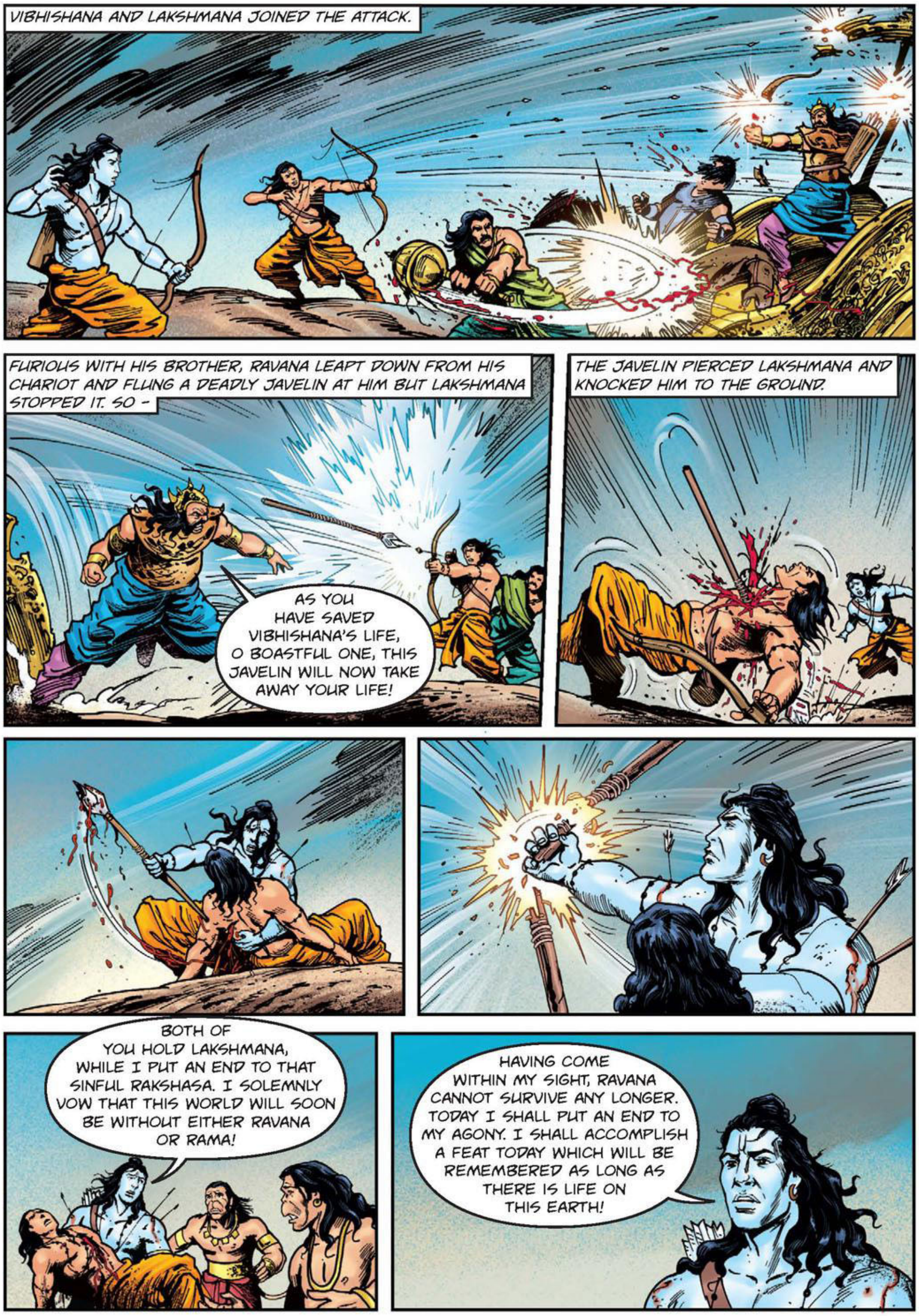


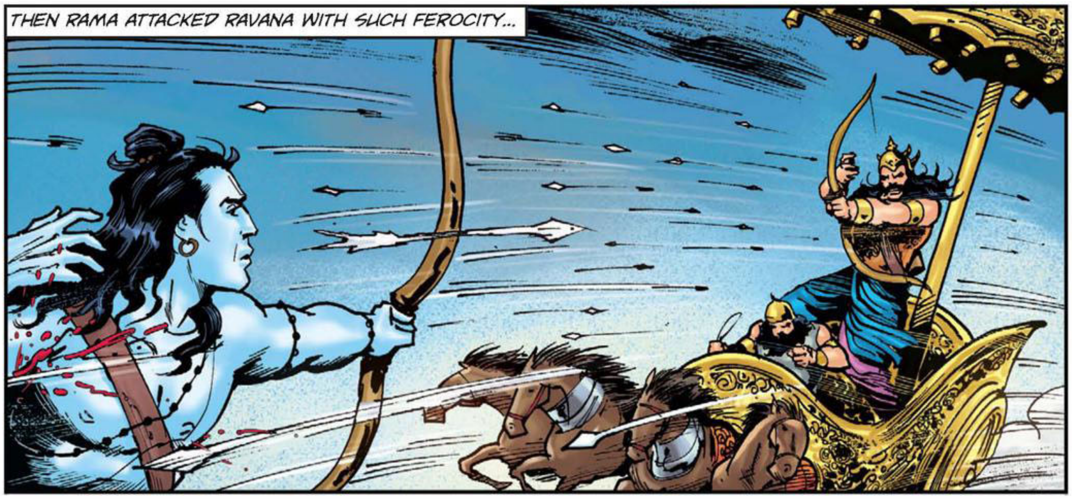
BYPASSING LAKSHMANA, RAVANA ATTACKED RAMA. IN THE FIERCE CONFLICT THAT FOLLOWED, THE TWO HEROES USED THE RAUDRASTRA, AGNEYASTRA AND OTHER POWERFUL MISSILES, INCLUDING ONE EVOLVED BY THE RAKSHASA, MAYA.

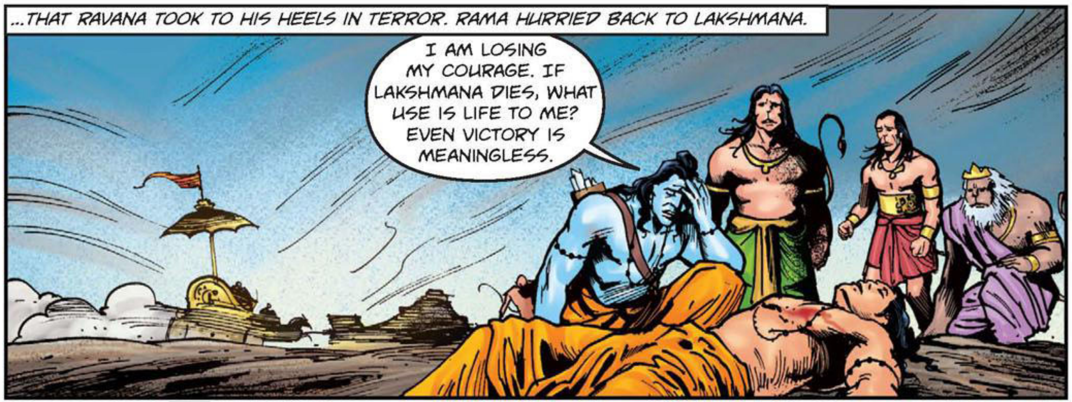


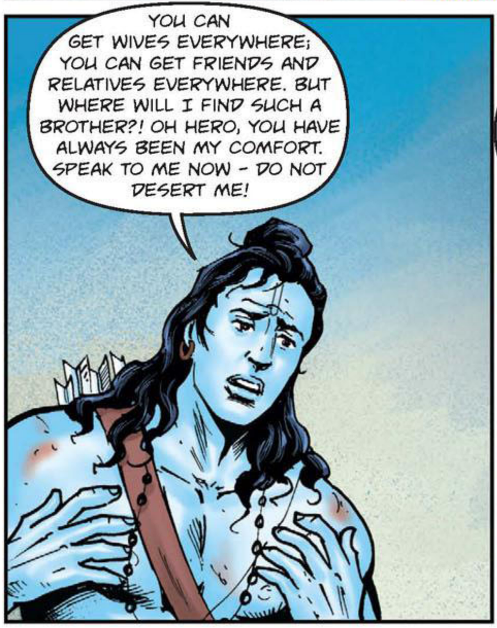


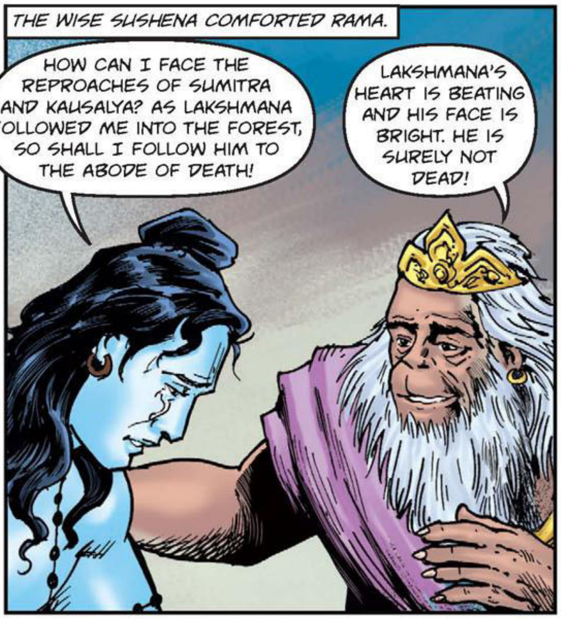


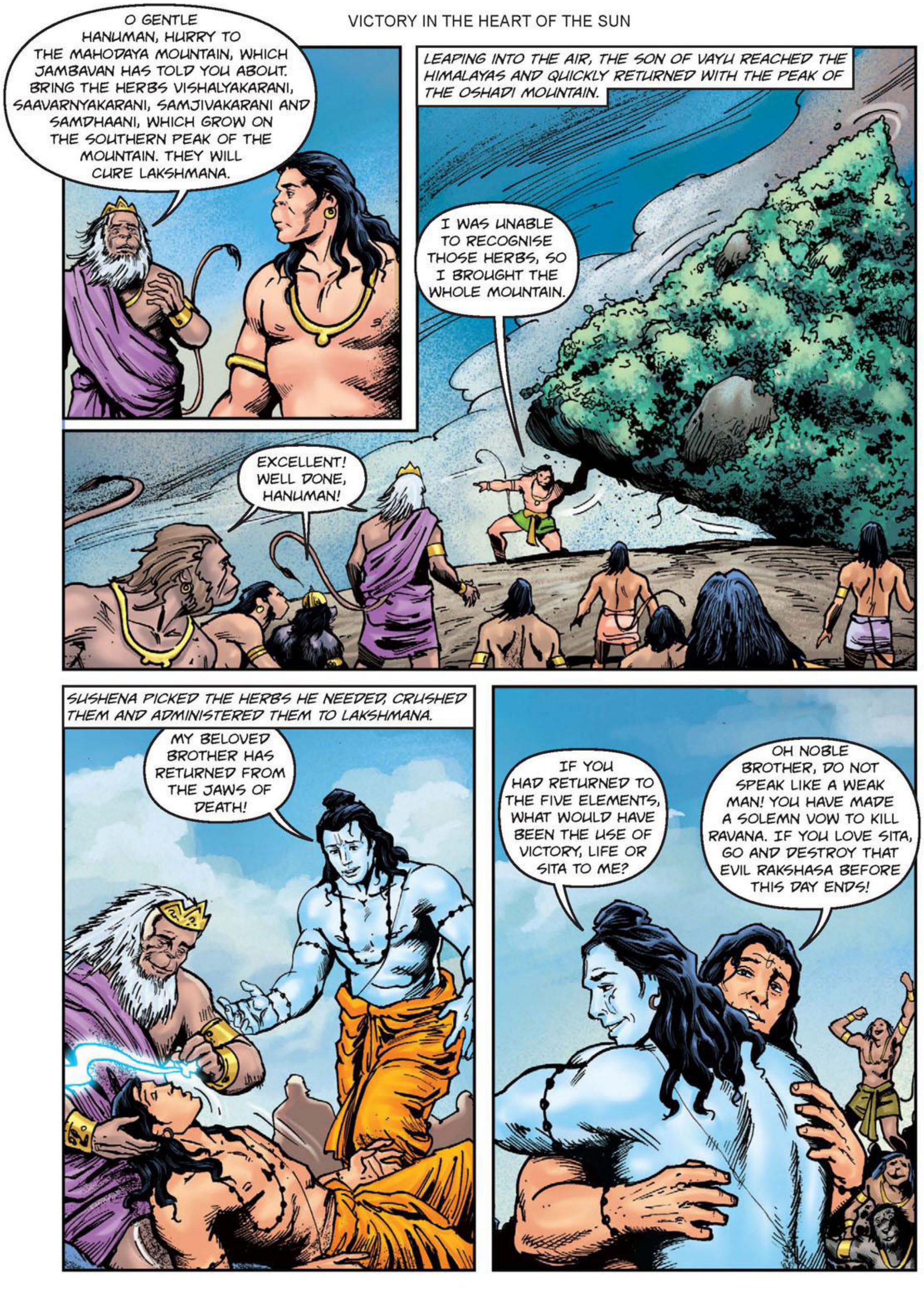

VIBHISHANA AND LAKSHMANA JOINED THE ATTACK.
FURIOUS WITH HIS BROTHER, RAVANA LEAPT DOWN FROM HIS CHARIOT AND FLUNG A DEADLY JAVELIN AT HIM BUT LAKSHMANA STOPPED IT. SO -
AS YOU HAVE SAVED VIBHISHANA'S LIFE, O BOASTFUL ONE, THIS JAVELIN WILL NOW TAKE AWAY YOUR LIFE!
THE JAVELIN PIERCED LAKSHMANA AND KNOCKED HIM TO THE GROUND.
BOTH OF YOU HOLD LAKSHMANA, WHILE I PUT AN END TO THAT SINFUL RAKSHASA. I SOLEMNLY VOW THAT THIS WORLD WILL SOON BE WITHOUT EITHER RAVANA OR RAMA!
HAVING COME WITHIN MY SIGHT, RAVANA CANNOT SURVIVE ANY LONGER. TODAY I SHALL PUT AN END TO MY AGONY. I SHALL ACCOMPLISH A FEAT TODAY WHICH WILL BE REMEMBERED AS LONG AS THERE IS LIFE ON THIS EARTH!


THEN RAMA ATTACKED RAVANA WITH SUCH FEROCITY...


...THAT RAVANA TOOK TO HIS HEELS IN TERROR. RAMA HURRIED BACK TO LAKSHMANA.
I AM LOSING MY COURAGE. IF LAKSHMANA DIES, WHAT USE IS LIFE TO ME? EVEN VICTORY IS MEANINGLESS.


YOU CAN GET WIVES EVERYWHERE; YOU CAN GET FRIENDS AND RELATIVES EVERYWHERE. BUT WHERE WILL I FIND SUCH A BROTHER?! OH HERO, YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN MY COMFORT. SPEAK TO ME NOW - DO NOT DESERT ME!

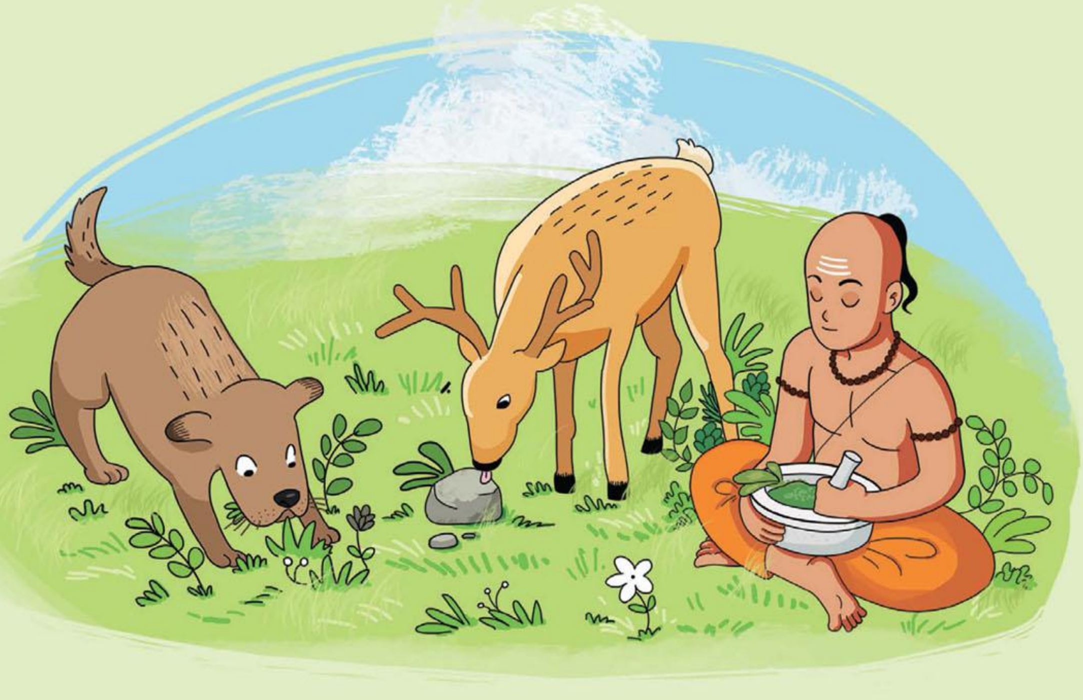

THE WISE SUSHENA COMFORTED RAMA.
HOW CAN I FACE THE REPROACHES OF SUMITRA AND KAUSALYA? AS LAKSHMANA FOLLOWED ME INTO THE FOREST, SO SHALL I FOLLOW HIM TO THE ABODE OF DEATH!
LAKSHMANA'S HEART IS BEATING AND HIS FACE IS BRIGHT. HE IS SURELY NOT DEAD!


O GENTLE HANUMAN, HURRY TO THE MAHODAYA MOUNTAIN, WHICH JAMBAVAN HAS TOLD YOU ABOUT. BRING THE HERBS VISHALYAKARANI, SAAVARNYAKARANI, SAMJIVAKARANI AND SAMDHAANI, WHICH GROW ON THE SOUTHERN PEAK OF THE MOUNTAIN. THEY WILL CURE LAKSHMANA.
LEAPING INTO THE AIR, THE SON OF VAYU REACHED THE HIMALAYAS AND QUICKLY RETURNED WITH THE PEAK OF THE OSHADI MOUNTAIN.
I WAS UNABLE TO RECOGNISE THOSE HERBS, SO I BROUGHT THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN.
EXCELLENT! WELL DONE, HANUMAN!
SUSHENA PICKED THE HERBS HE NEEDED, CRUSHED THEM AND ADMINISTERED THEM TO LAKSHMANA.
MY BELOVED BROTHER HAS RETURNED FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH!
IF YOU HAD RETURNED TO THE FIVE ELEMENTS, WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE USE OF VICTORY, LIFE OR SITA TO ME?
OH NOBLE BROTHER, DO NOT SPEAK LIKE A WEAK MAN! YOU HAVE MADE A SOLEMN VOW TO KILL RAVANA. IF YOU LOVE SITA, GO AND DESTROY THAT EVIL RAKSHASA BEFORE THIS DAY ENDS!

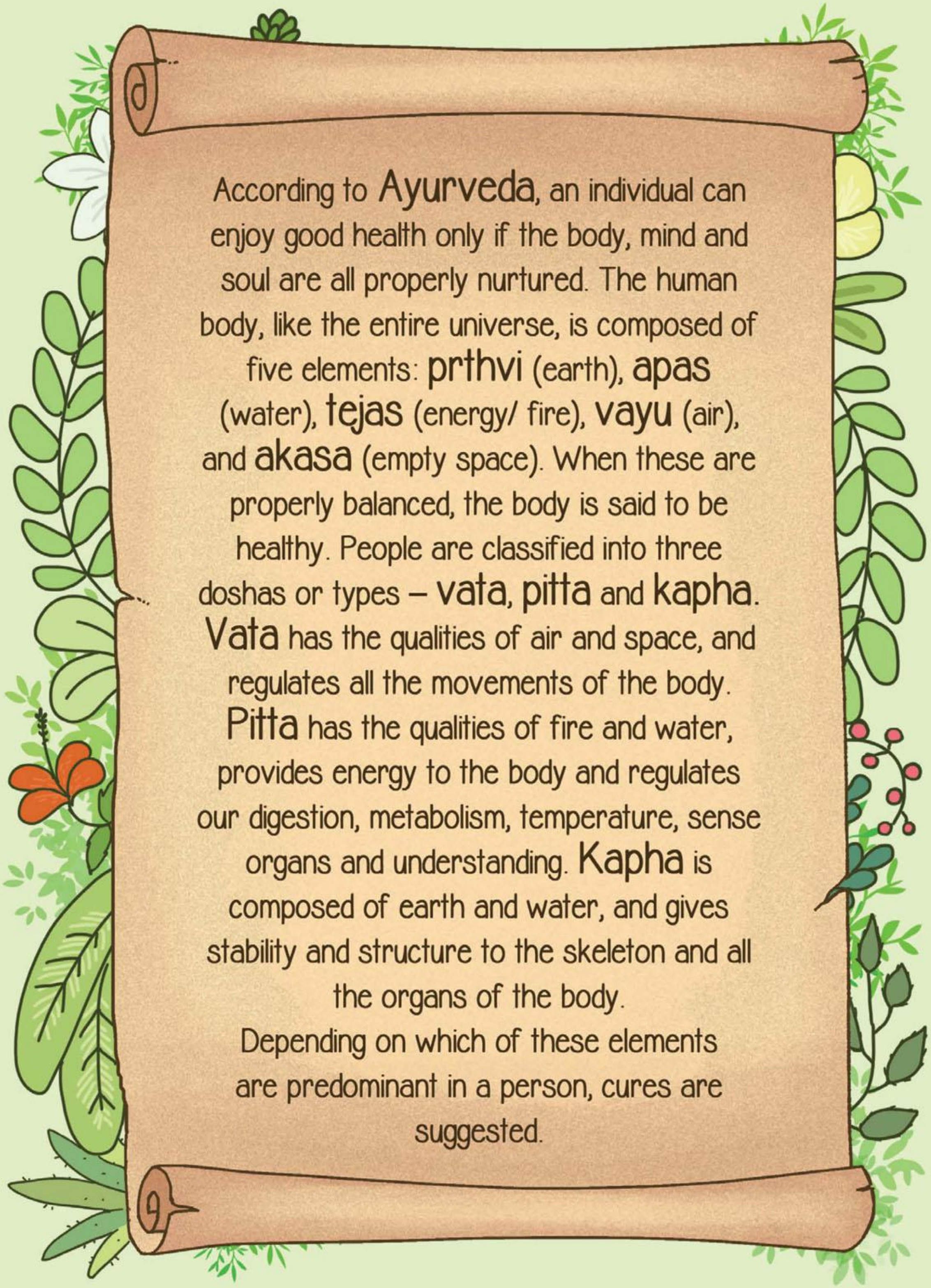
MEDICINE IN ANCIENT INDIA

From prehistoric times, human beings have treated their diseases with natural herbs and minerals, in much the same way that a dog will nibble grass to cure an upset stomach, or a deer will lick salt to keep all its organs in working order.

The first documented knowledge about medicines in India is found in the Rig Veda (Oshadhi Sooktam) and the Atharva Veda, which are believed to be more than 5000 years old. In addition to providing mantras against diseases and information about useful plants and herbs, the Atharva Veda says that diseases are caused by organisms called yatudhāna, kimīdin, krimi, etc.

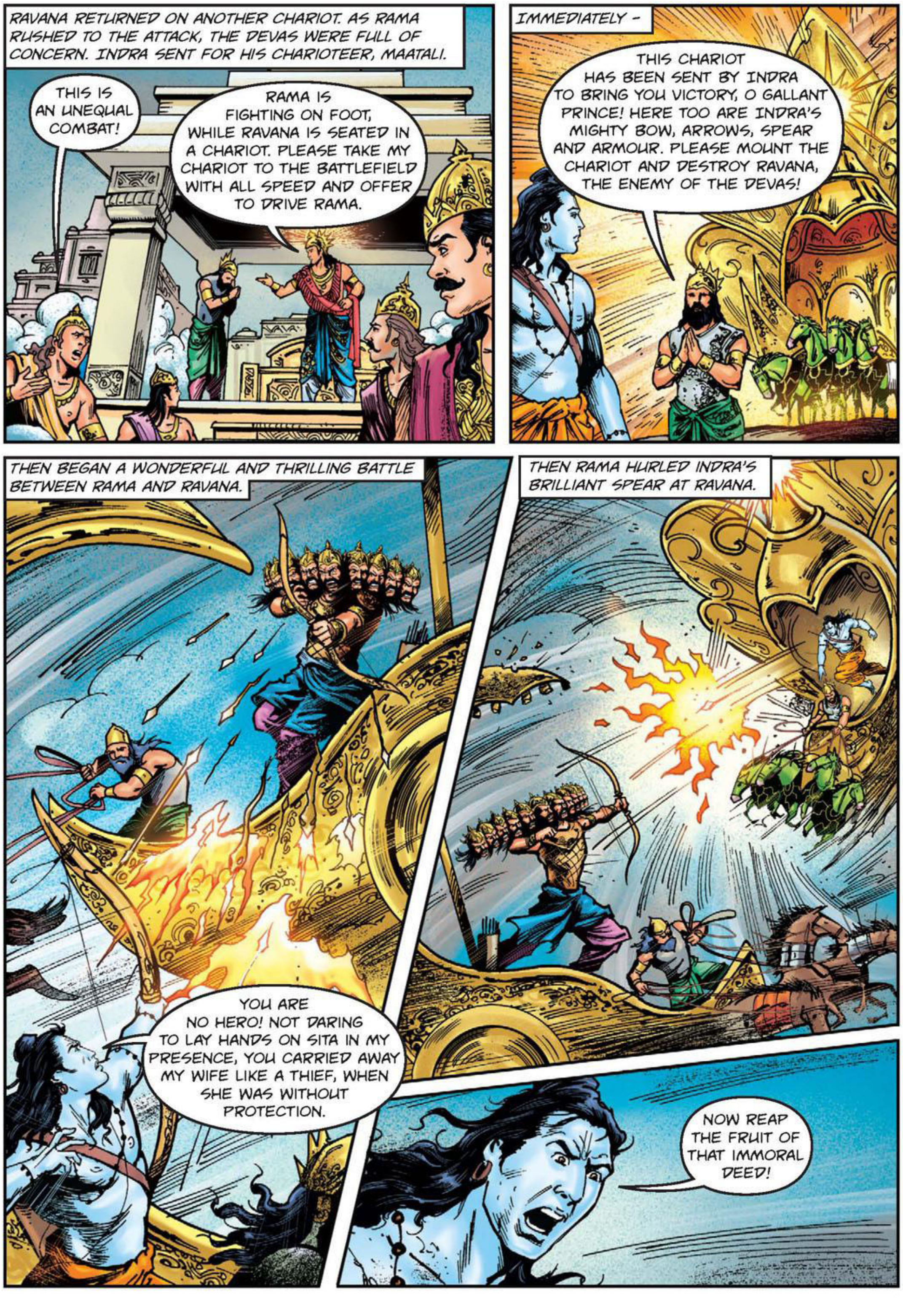


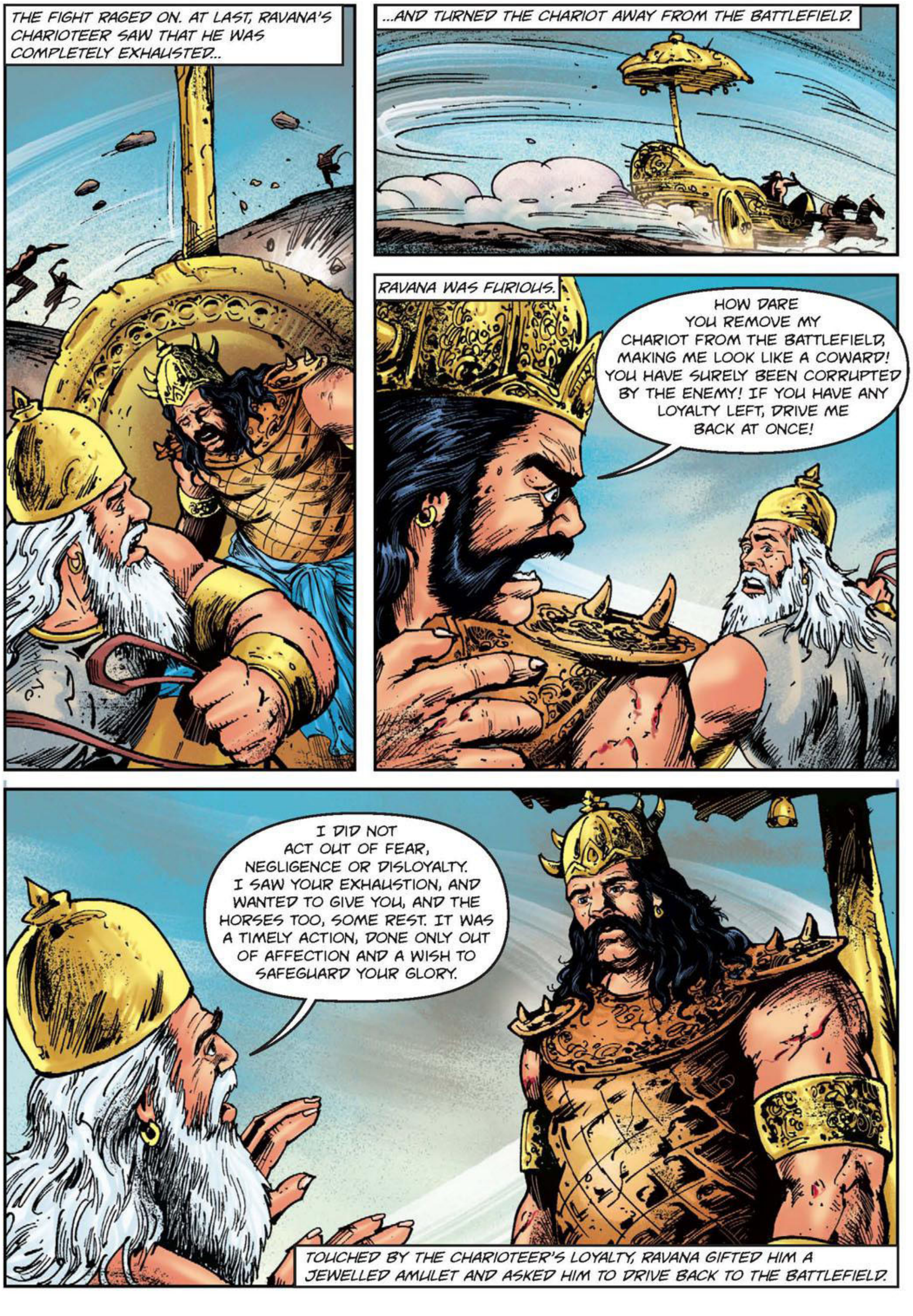
Over the following centuries, the study of medicine grew more systematic, and became known as Ayur Veda (Life Science). Three important foundation texts of Ayurveda were compiled in the first millennium BCE: Atreya Samhita, Susruta Samhita, and Charaka Samhita. These texts cover all the branches of modern medicine, and describe over 600 drugs of animal, plant and mineral origin.

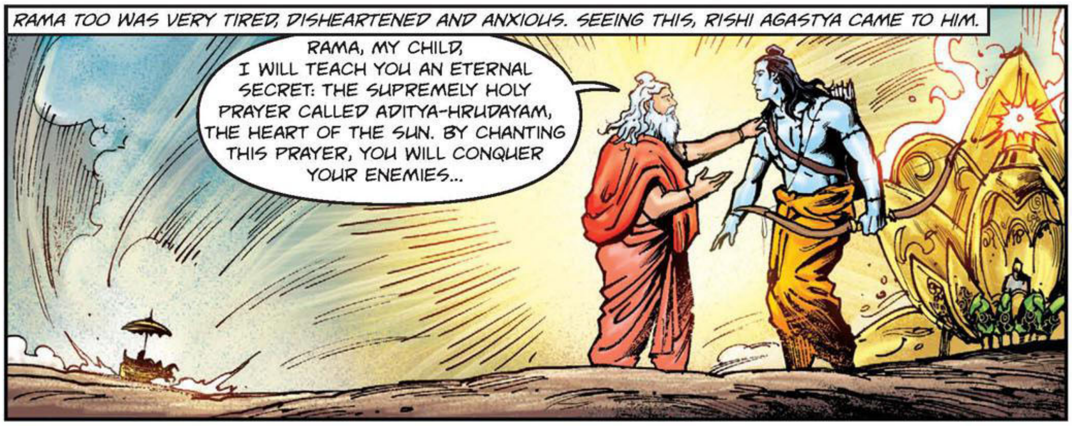


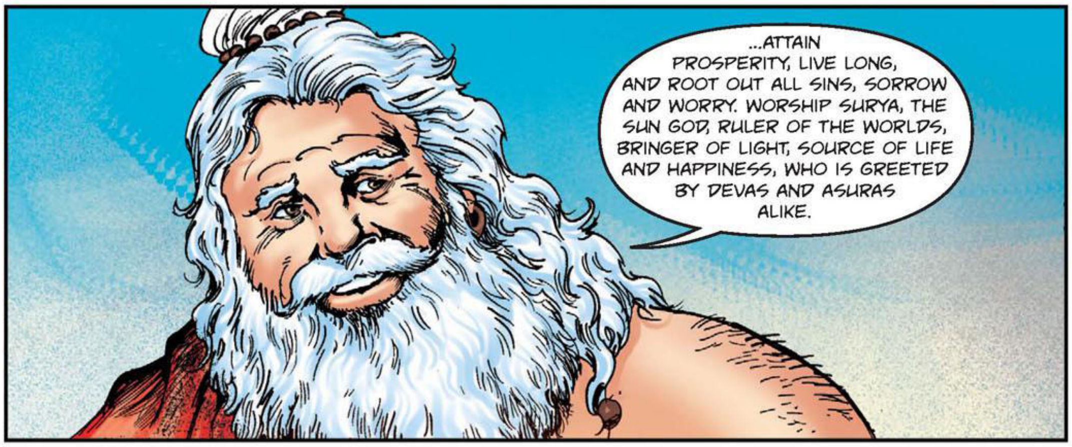
According to **Ayurveda**, an individual can enjoy good health only if the body, mind and soul are all properly nurtured. The human body, like the entire universe, is composed of five elements: **prthvi** (earth), **apas** (water), **tejas** (energy/ fire), **vayu** (air), and **akasa** (empty space). When these are properly balanced, the body is said to be healthy. People are classified into three doshas or types – **vata**, **pitta** and **kapha**. **Vata** has the qualities of air and space, and regulates all the movements of the body. **Pitta** has the qualities of fire and water, provides energy to the body and regulates our digestion, metabolism, temperature, sense organs and understanding. **Kapha** is composed of earth and water, and gives stability and structure to the skeleton and all the organs of the body.

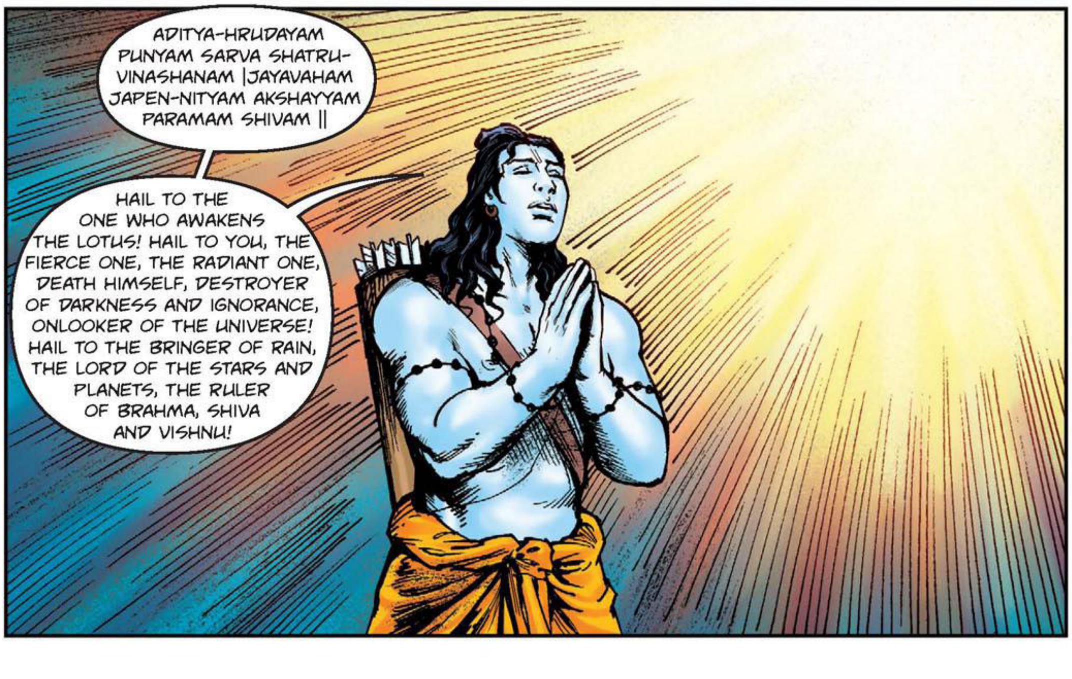
Depending on which of these elements are predominant in a person, cures are suggested.

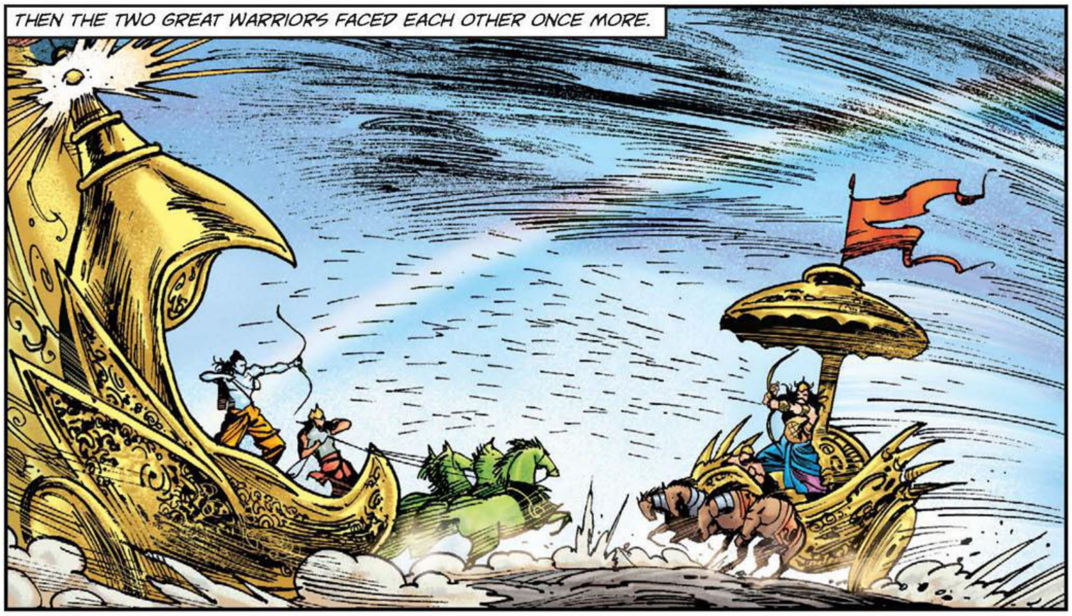

RAVANA RETURNED ON ANOTHER CHARIOT. AS RAMA RUSHED TO THE ATTACK, THE DEVAS WERE FULL OF CONCERN. INDRA SENT FOR HIS CHARIOTEER, MAATALI.
THIS IS AN UNEQUAL COMBAT!
RAMA IS FIGHTING ON FOOT, WHILE RAVANA IS SEATED IN A CHARIOT. PLEASE TAKE MY CHARIOT TO THE BATTLEFIELD WITH ALL SPEED AND OFFER TO DRIVE RAMA.
IMMEDIATELY -
THIS CHARIOT HAS BEEN SENT BY INDRA TO BRING YOU VICTORY, O GALLANT PRINCE! HERE TOO ARE INDRA'S MIGHTY BOW, ARROWS, SPEAR AND ARMOUR. PLEASE MOUNT THE CHARIOT AND DESTROY RAVANA, THE ENEMY OF THE DEVAS!
THEN BEGAN A WONDERFUL AND THRILLING BATTLE BETWEEN RAMA AND RAVANA.
YOU ARE NO HERO! NOT DARING TO LAY HANDS ON SITA IN MY PRESENCE, YOU CARRIED AWAY MY WIFE LIKE A THIEF, WHEN SHE WAS WITHOUT PROTECTION.
THEN RAMA HURLED INDRA'S BRILLIANT SPEAR AT RAVANA.
NOW REAP THE FRUIT OF THAT IMMORAL DEED!


THE FIGHT RAGED ON. AT LAST, RAVANA'S CHARIOTEER SAW THAT HE WAS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED...
...AND TURNED THE CHARIOT AWAY FROM THE BATTLEFIELD.
RAVANA WAS FURIOUS.
HOW DARE YOU REMOVE MY CHARIOT FROM THE BATTLEFIELD, MAKING ME LOOK LIKE A COWARD! YOU HAVE SURELY BEEN CORRUPTED BY THE ENEMY! IF YOU HAVE ANY LOYALTY LEFT, DRIVE ME BACK AT ONCE!
I DID NOT ACT OUT OF FEAR, NEGLIGENCE OR DISLOYALTY. I SAW YOUR EXHAUSTION, AND WANTED TO GIVE YOU, AND THE HORSES TOO, SOME REST. IT WAS A TIMELY ACTION, DONE ONLY OUT OF AFFECTION AND A WISH TO SAFEGUARD YOUR GLORY.
TOUCHED BY THE CHARIOTEER'S LOYALTY, RAVANA GIFTED HIM A JEWELLED AMULET AND ASKED HIM TO DRIVE BACK TO THE BATTLEFIELD.

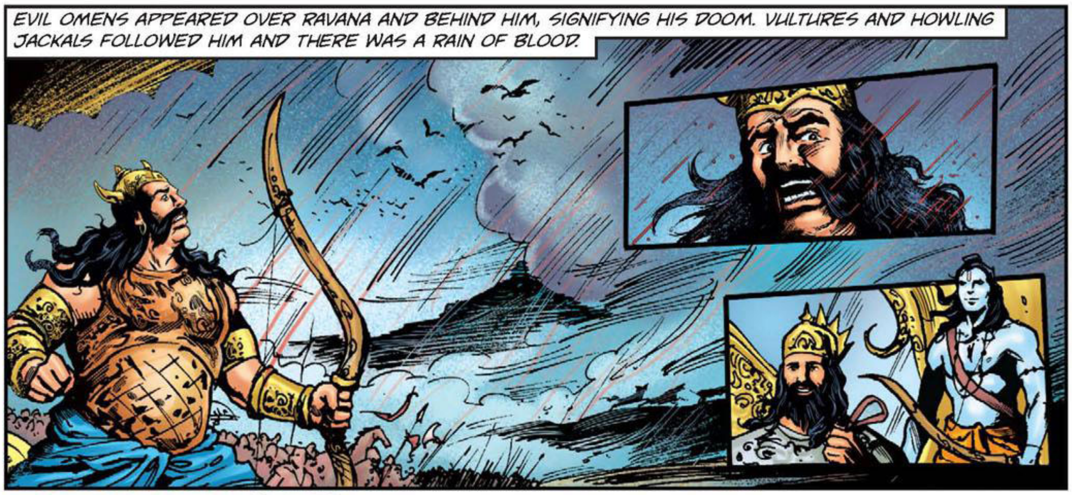

RAMA TOO WAS VERY TIRED, DISHEARTENED AND ANXIOUS. SEEING THIS, RISHI AGASTYA CAME TO HIM.
RAMA, MY CHILD, I WILL TEACH YOU AN ETERNAL SECRET: THE SUPREMELY HOLY PRAYER CALLED ADITYA-HRUDAYAM, THE HEART OF THE SUN. BY CHANTING THIS PRAYER, YOU WILL CONQUER YOUR ENEMIES...


...ATTAIN PROSPERITY, LIVE LONG, AND ROOT OUT ALL SINS, SORROW AND WORRY. WORSHIP SURYA, THE SUN GOD, RULER OF THE WORLDS, BRINGER OF LIGHT, SOURCE OF LIFE AND HAPPINESS, WHO IS GREETED BY DEVAS AND ASURAS ALIKE.

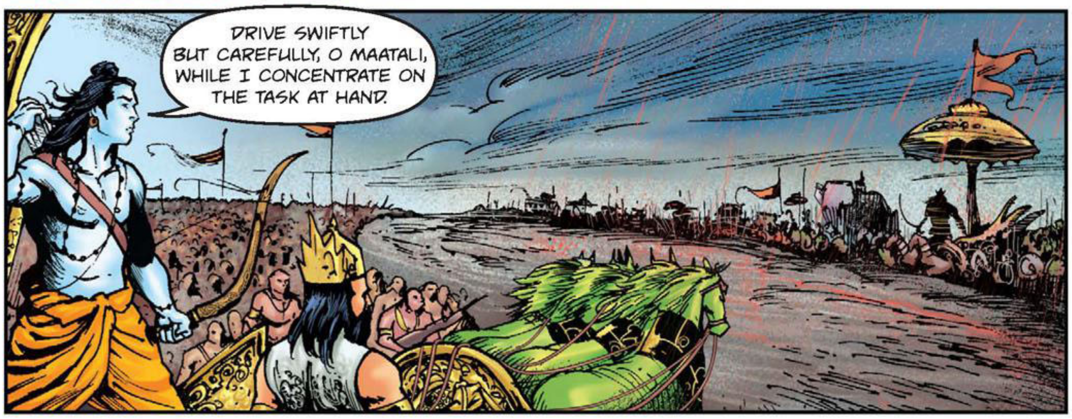

ADITYA-HRUDAYAM PUNYAM SARVA SHATRU-VINASHANAM |JAYAVAHAM JAPEN-NITYAM AKSHAYYAM PARAMAM SHIVAM ||
HAIL TO THE ONE WHO AWAKENS THE LOTUS! HAIL TO YOU, THE FIERCE ONE, THE RADIANT ONE, DEATH HIMSELF, DESTROYER OF DARKNESS AND IGNORANCE, ONLOOKER OF THE UNIVERSE! HAIL TO THE BRINGER OF RAIN, THE LORD OF THE STARS AND PLANETS, THE RULER OF BRAHMA, SHIVA AND VISHNU!

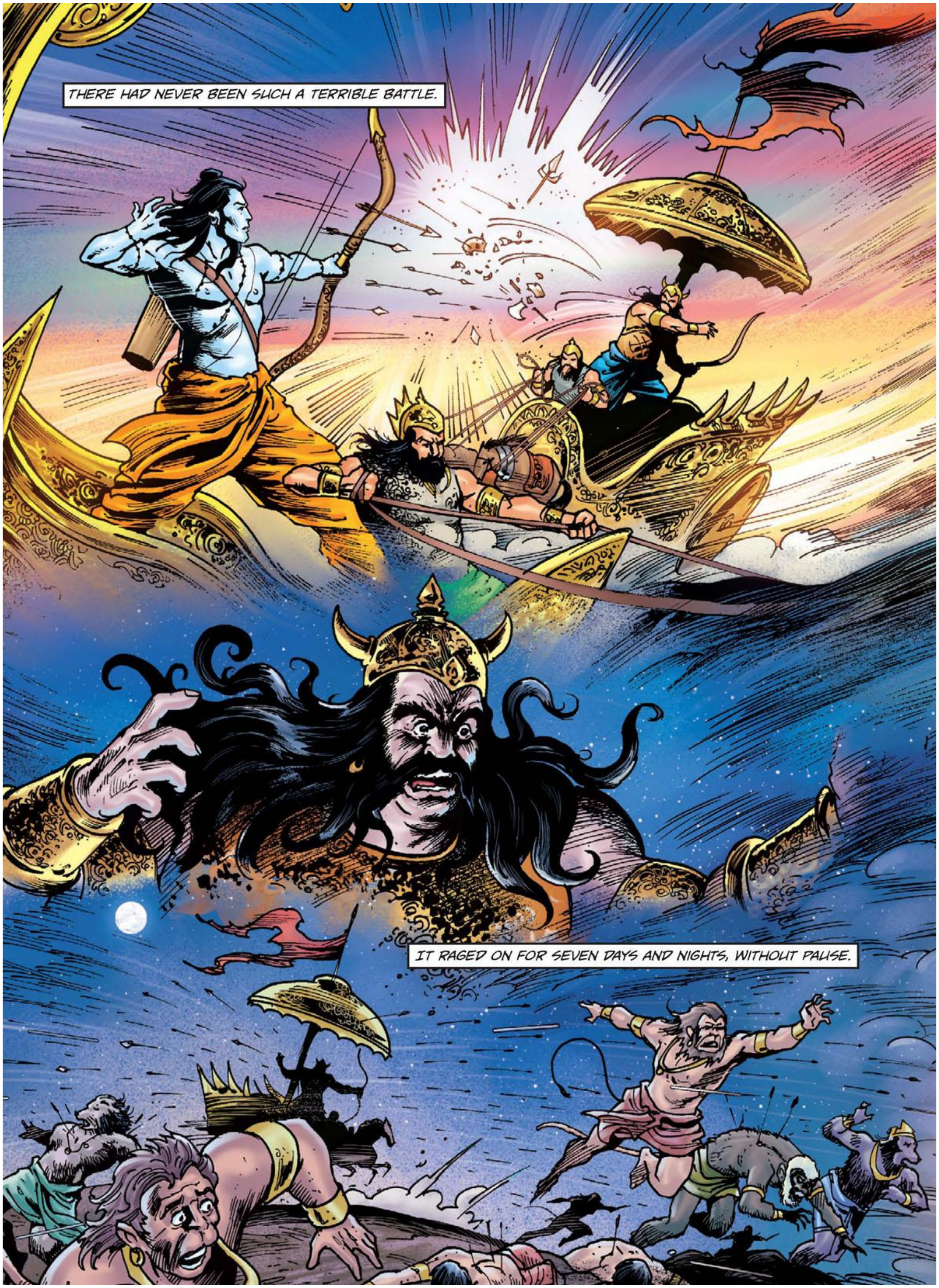


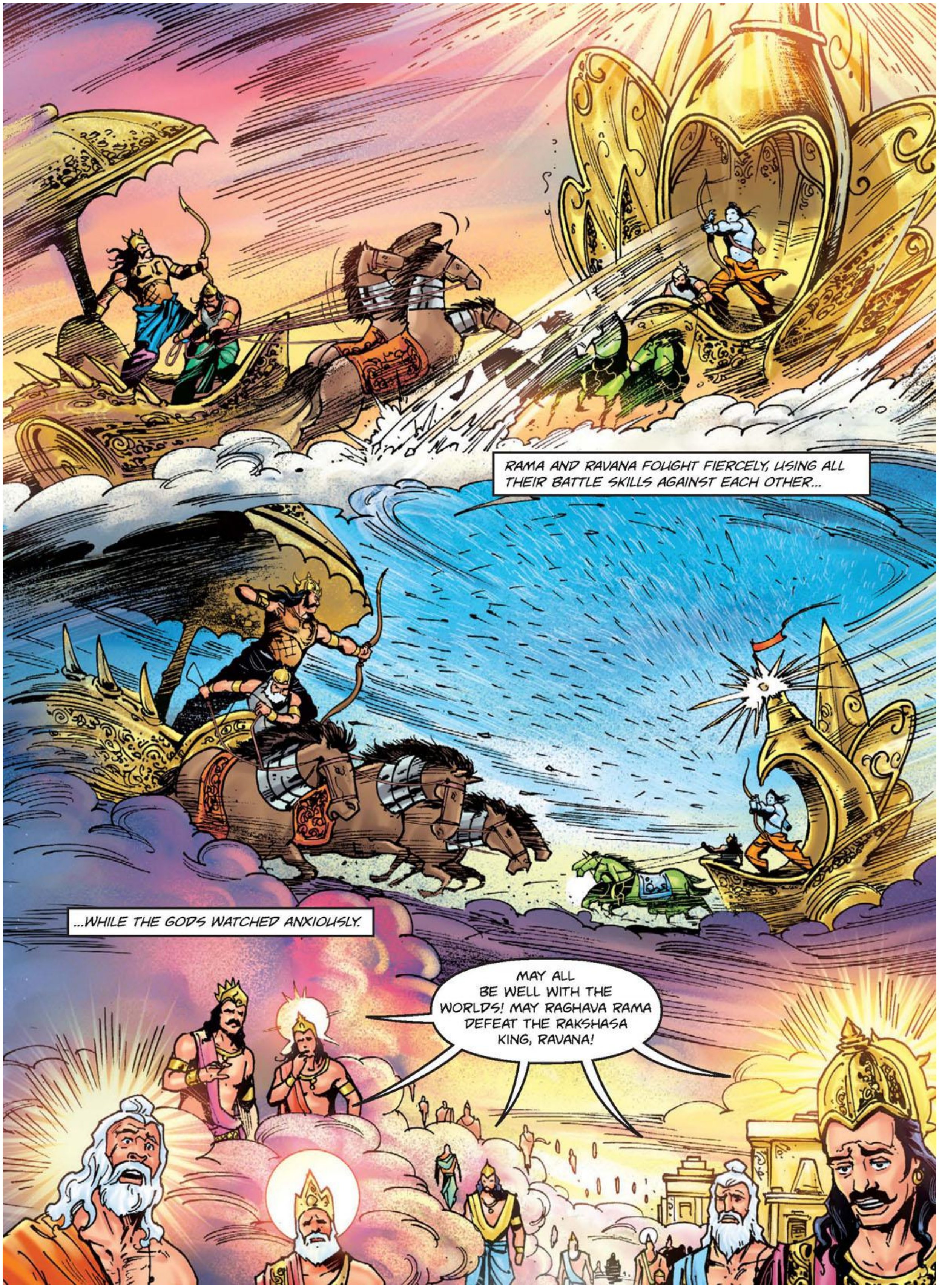
THEN THE TWO GREAT WARRIORS FACED EACH OTHER ONCE MORE.

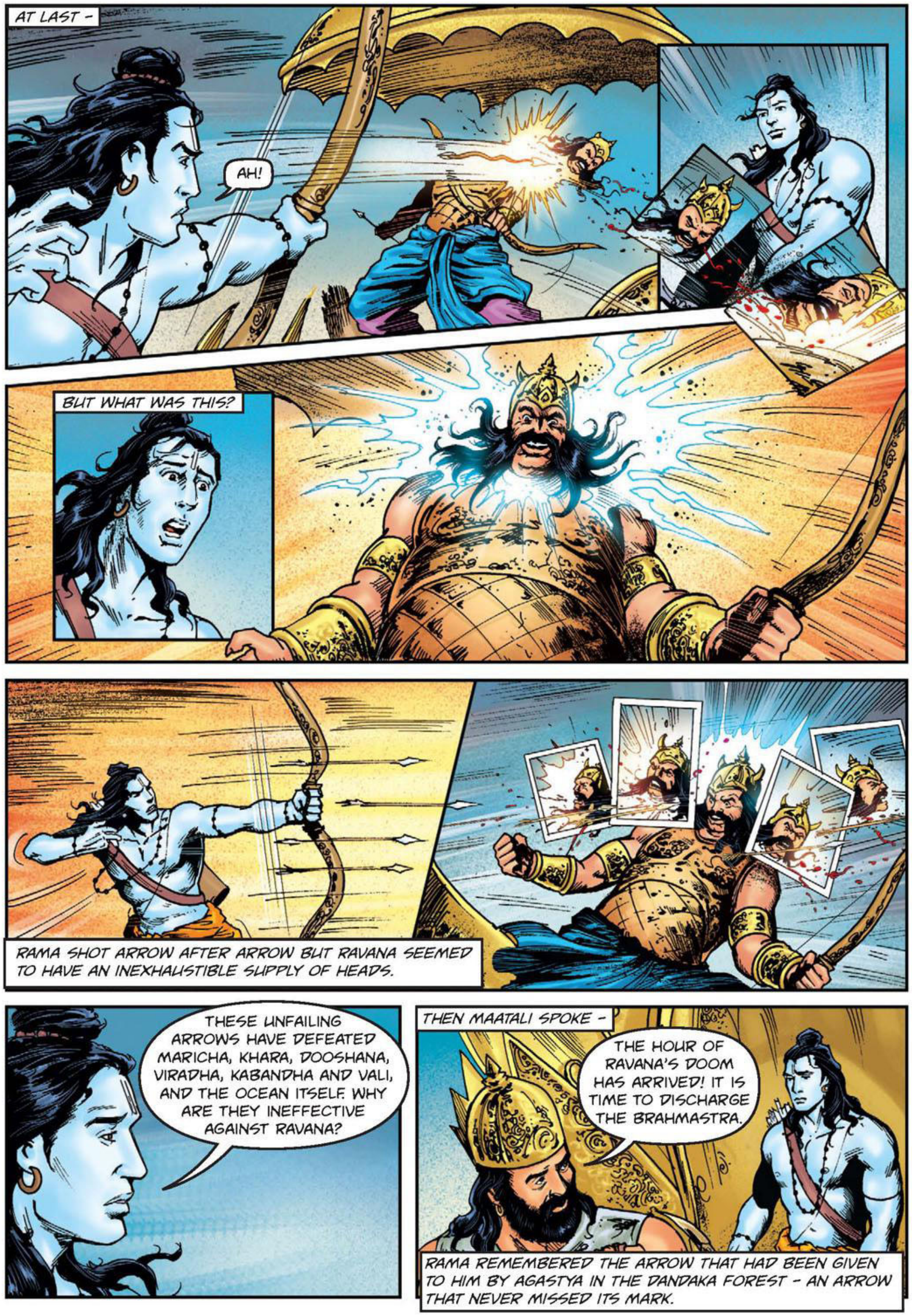


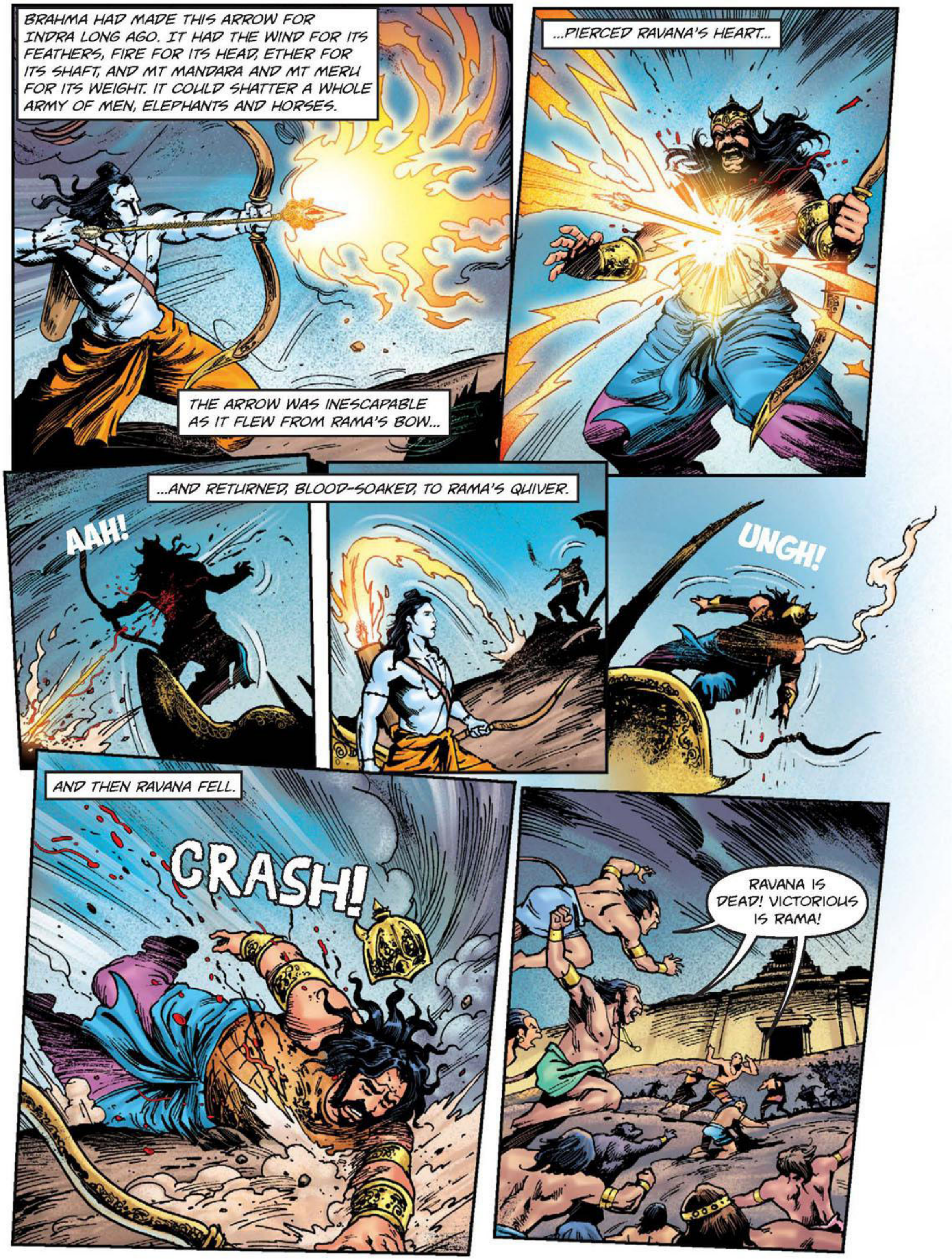
EVIL OMENS APPEARED OVER RAVANA AND BEHIND HIM, SIGNIFYING HIS DOOM. VULTURES AND HOWLING JACKALS FOLLOWED HIM AND THERE WAS A RAIN OF BLOOD.

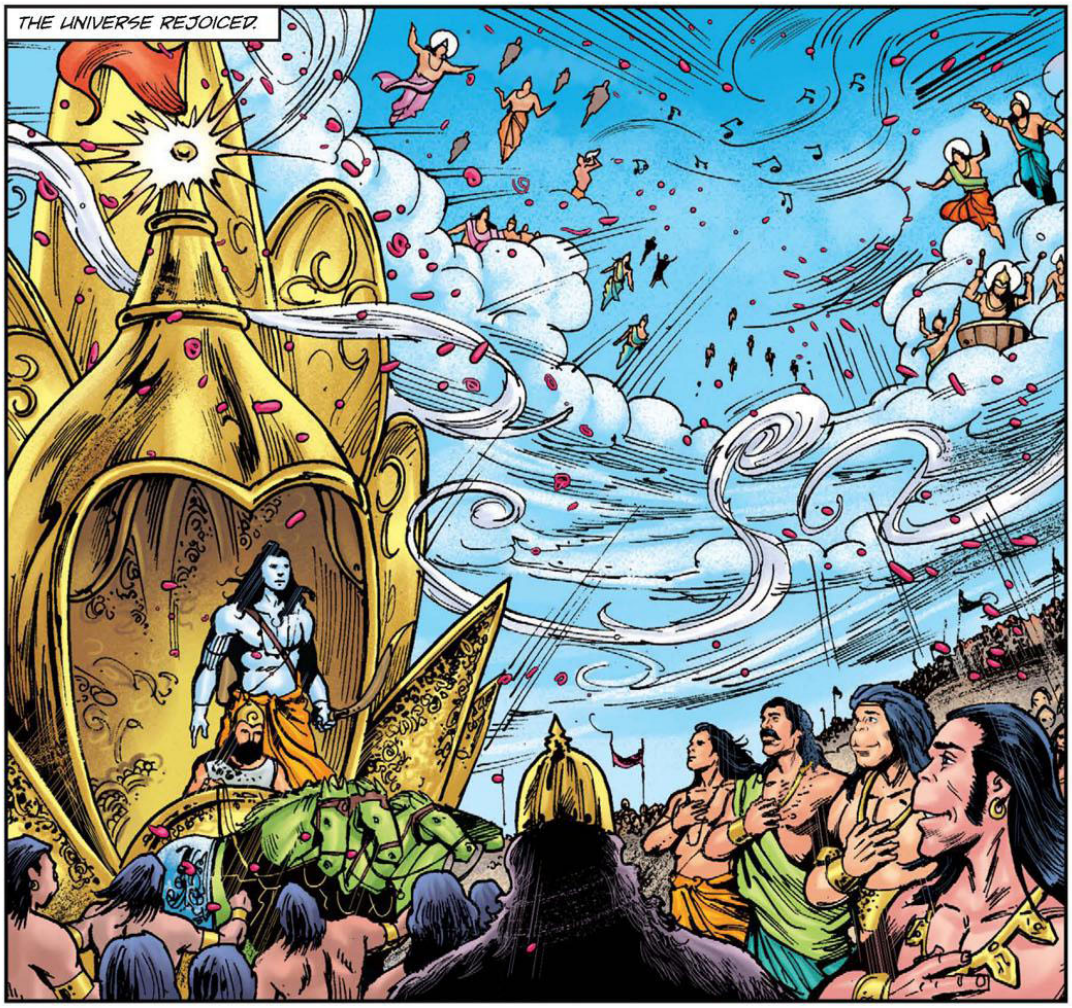

DRIVE SWIFTLY BUT CAREFULLY, O MAATALI, WHILE I CONCENTRATE ON THE TASK AT HAND.

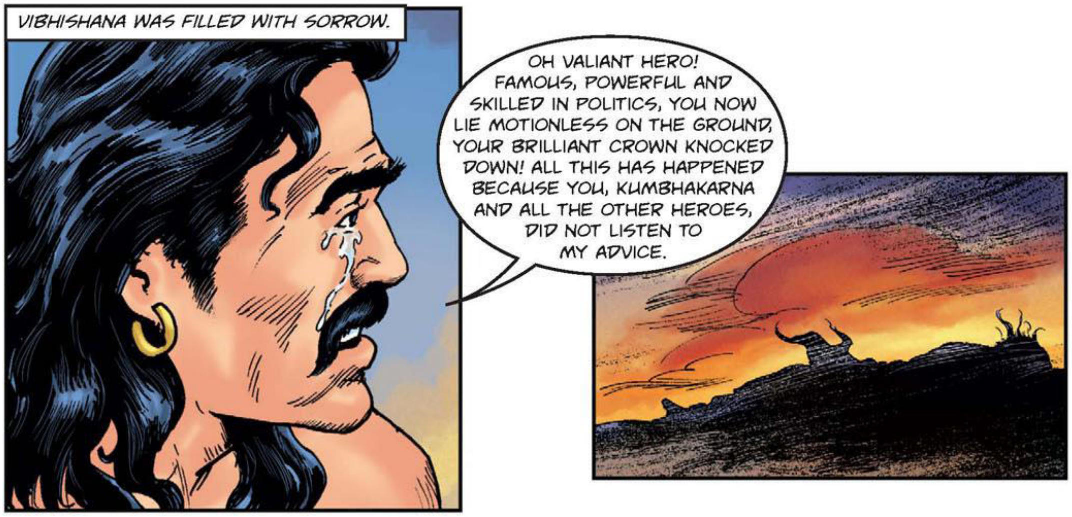

THERE HAD NEVER BEEN SUCH A TERRIBLE BATTLE.
IT RAGED ON FOR SEVEN DAYS AND NIGHTS, WITHOUT PAUSE.

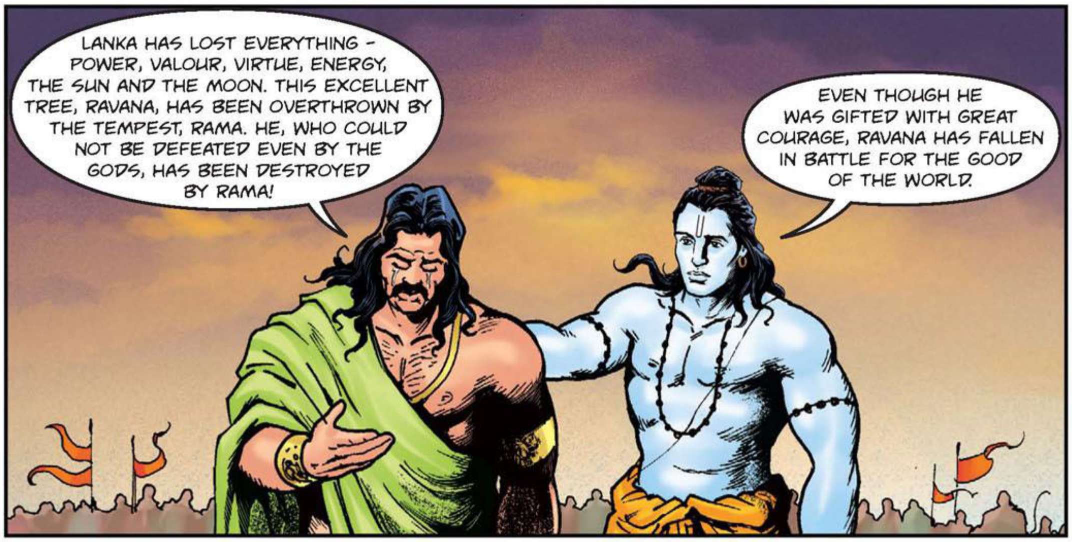

RAMA AND RAVANA FOUGHT FIERCELY, USING ALL THEIR BATTLE SKILLS AGAINST EACH OTHER...
...WHILE THE GODS WATCHED ANXIOUSLY.
MAY ALL BE WELL WITH THE WORLDS! MAY RAGHAVA RAMA DEFEAT THE RAKSHASA KING, RAVANA!

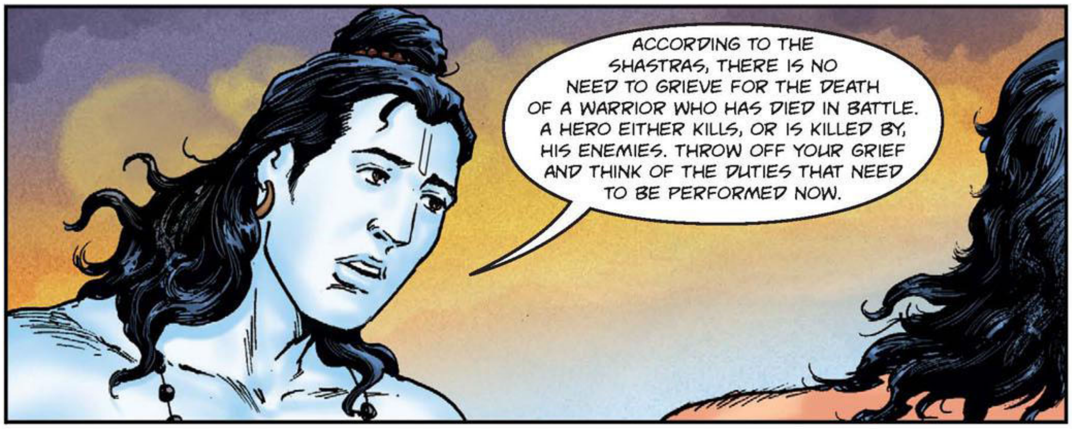

AT LAST –
AH!
BUT WHAT WAS THIS?
RAMA SHOT ARROW AFTER ARROW BUT RAVANA SEEMED TO HAVE AN INEXHAUSTIBLE SUPPLY OF HEADS.
THESE UNFAILING ARROWS HAVE DEFEATED MARICHA, KHARA, DOOSHANA, VIRADHA, KABANDHA AND VALI, AND THE OCEAN ITSELF. WHY ARE THEY INEFFECTIVE AGAINST RAVANA?
THEN MAATALI SPOKE –
THE HOUR OF RAVANA'S DOOM HAS ARRIVED! IT IS TIME TO DISCHARGE THE BRAHMASTRA.
RAMA REMEMBERED THE ARROW THAT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO HIM BY AGASTYA IN THE DANDAKA FOREST – AN ARROW THAT NEVER MISSED ITS MARK.

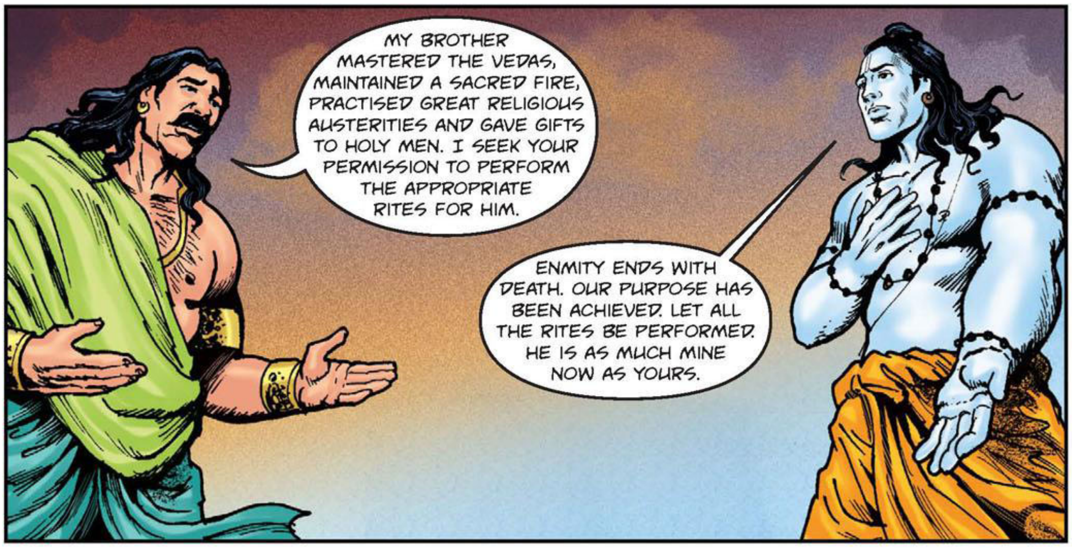

BRAHMA HAD MADE THIS ARROW FOR INDRA LONG AGO. IT HAD THE WIND FOR ITS FEATHERS, FIRE FOR ITS HEAD, ETHER FOR ITS SHAFT, AND MT MANDARA AND MT MERU FOR ITS WEIGHT. IT COULD SHATTER A WHOLE ARMY OF MEN, ELEPHANTS AND HORSES.
THE ARROW WAS INESCAPABLE AS IT FLEW FROM RAMA'S BOW...
...PIERCED RAVANA'S HEART...
...AND RETURNED, BLOOD-SOAKED, TO RAMA'S QUIVER.
AAH!
UNGH!
AND THEN RAVANA FELL.
CRASH!
RAVANA IS DEAD! VICTORIOUS IS RAMA!

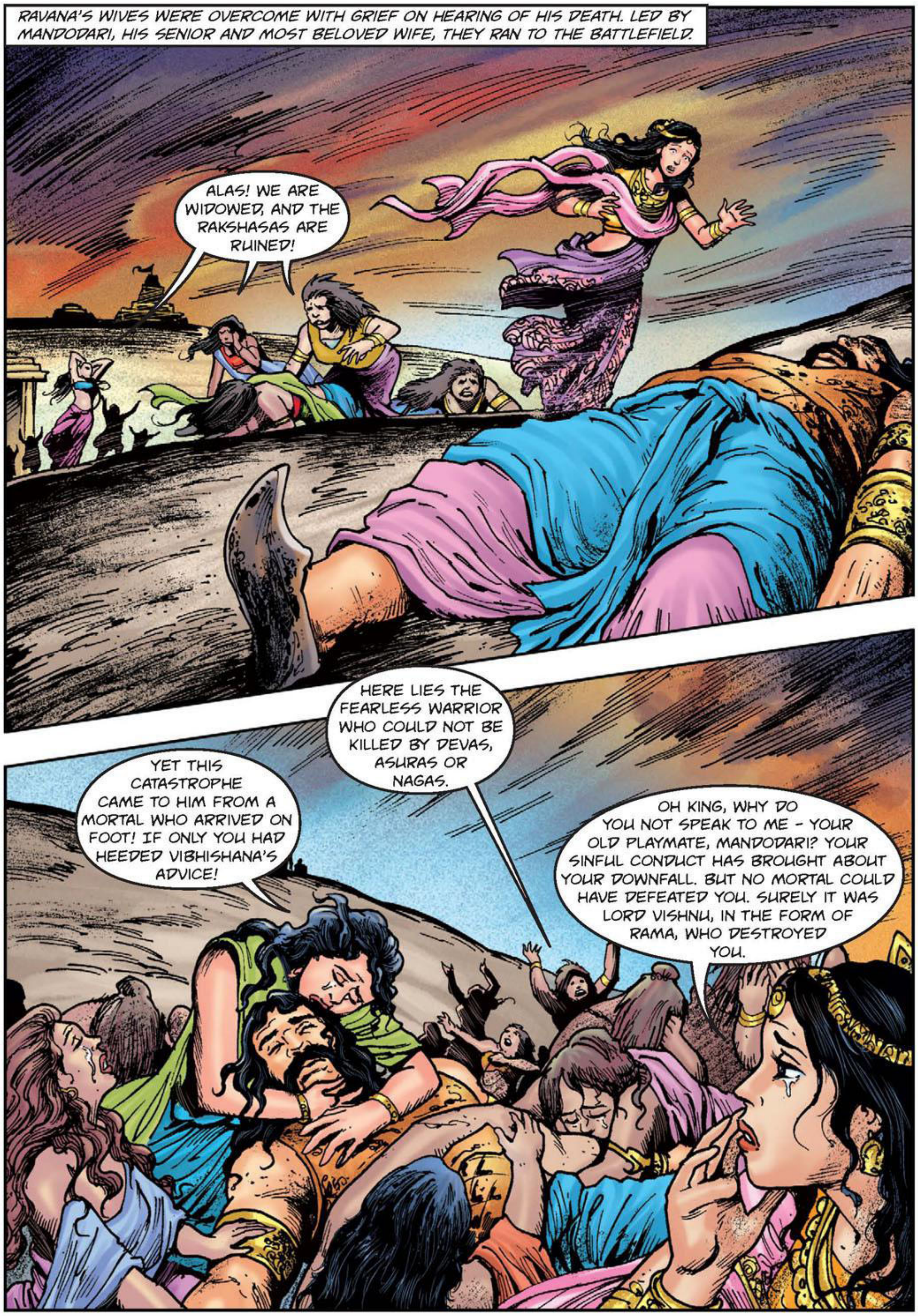

THE UNIVERSE REJOICED.

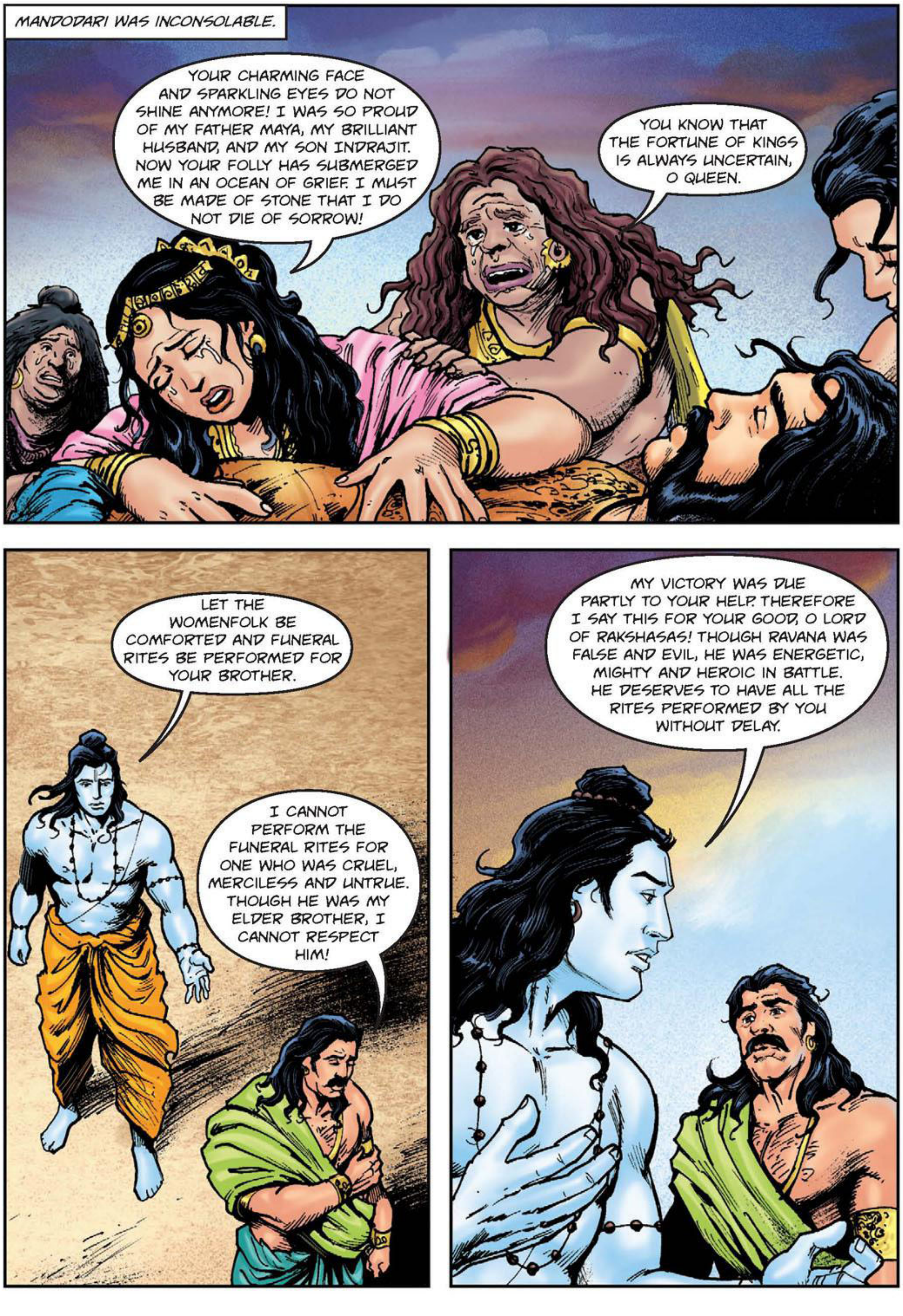

VIBHISHANA WAS FILLED WITH SORROW.
OH VALIANT HERO! FAMOUS, POWERFUL AND SKILLED IN POLITICS, YOU NOW LIE MOTIONLESS ON THE GROUND, YOUR BRILLIANT CROWN KNOCKED DOWN! ALL THIS HAS HAPPENED BECAUSE YOU, KUMBHAKARNA AND ALL THE OTHER HEROES, DID NOT LISTEN TO MY ADVICE.

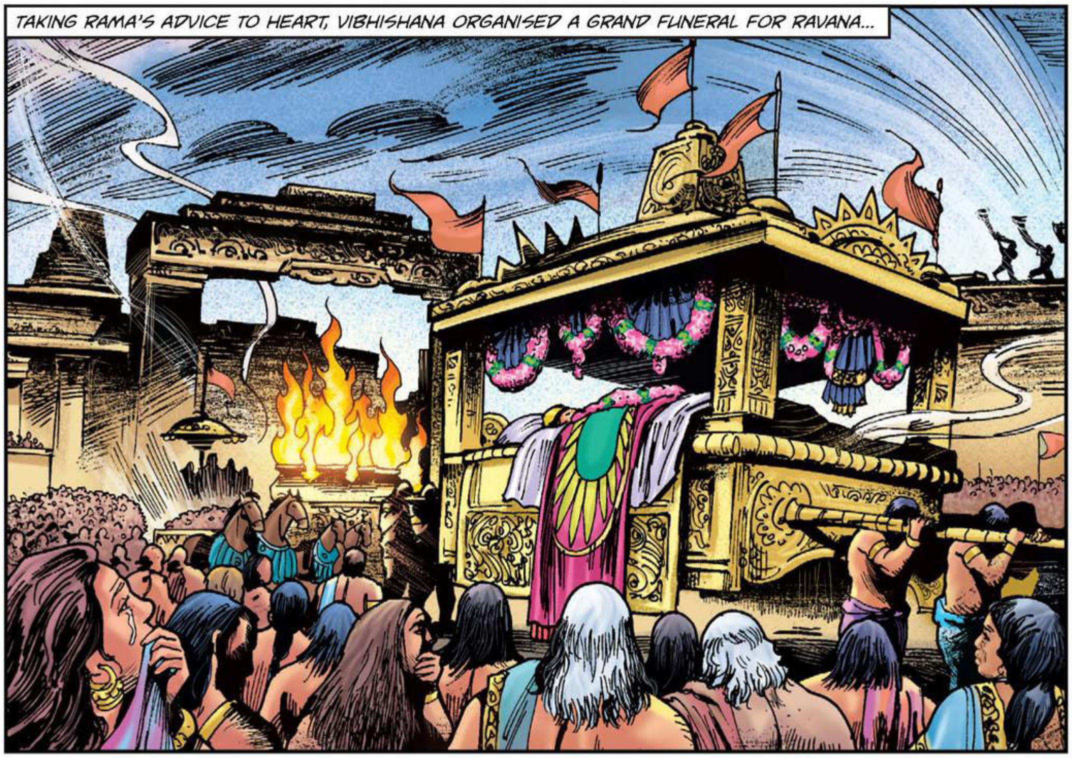

LANKA HAS LOST EVERYTHING - POWER, VALOUR, VIRTUE, ENERGY, THE SUN AND THE MOON. THIS EXCELLENT TREE, RAVANA, HAS BEEN OVERTHROWN BY THE TEMPEST, RAMA. HE, WHO COULD NOT BE DEFEATED EVEN BY THE GODS, HAS BEEN DESTROYED BY RAMA!
EVEN THOUGH HE WAS GIFTED WITH GREAT COURAGE, RAVANA HAS FALLEN IN BATTLE FOR THE GOOD OF THE WORLD.

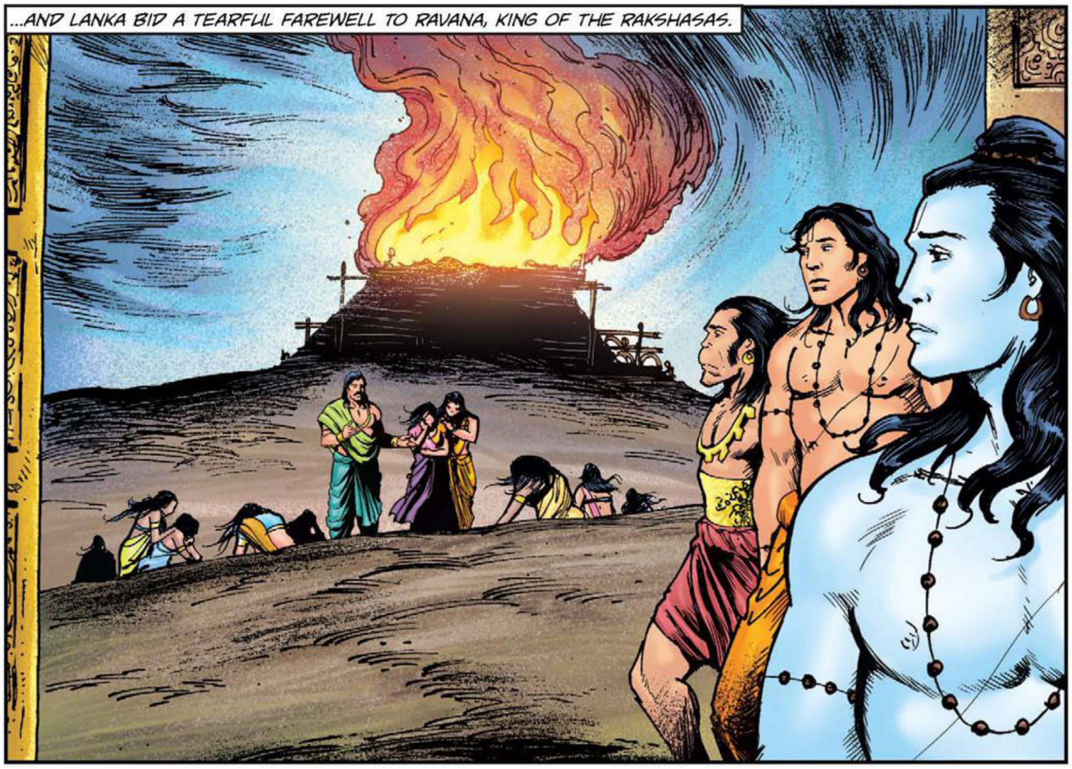

ACCORDING TO THE SHASTRAS, THERE IS NO NEED TO GRIEVE FOR THE DEATH OF A WARRIOR WHO HAS DIED IN BATTLE. A HERO EITHER KILLS, OR IS KILLED BY, HIS ENEMIES. THROW OFF YOUR GRIEF AND THINK OF THE DUTIES THAT NEED TO BE PERFORMED NOW.


MY BROTHER MASTERED THE VEDAS, MAINTAINED A SACRED FIRE, PRACTISED GREAT RELIGIOUS AUSTERITIES AND GAVE GIFTS TO HOLY MEN. I SEEK YOUR PERMISSION TO PERFORM THE APPROPRIATE RITES FOR HIM.
ENMITY ENDS WITH DEATH. OUR PURPOSE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. LET ALL THE RITES BE PERFORMED. HE IS AS MUCH MINE NOW AS YOURS.

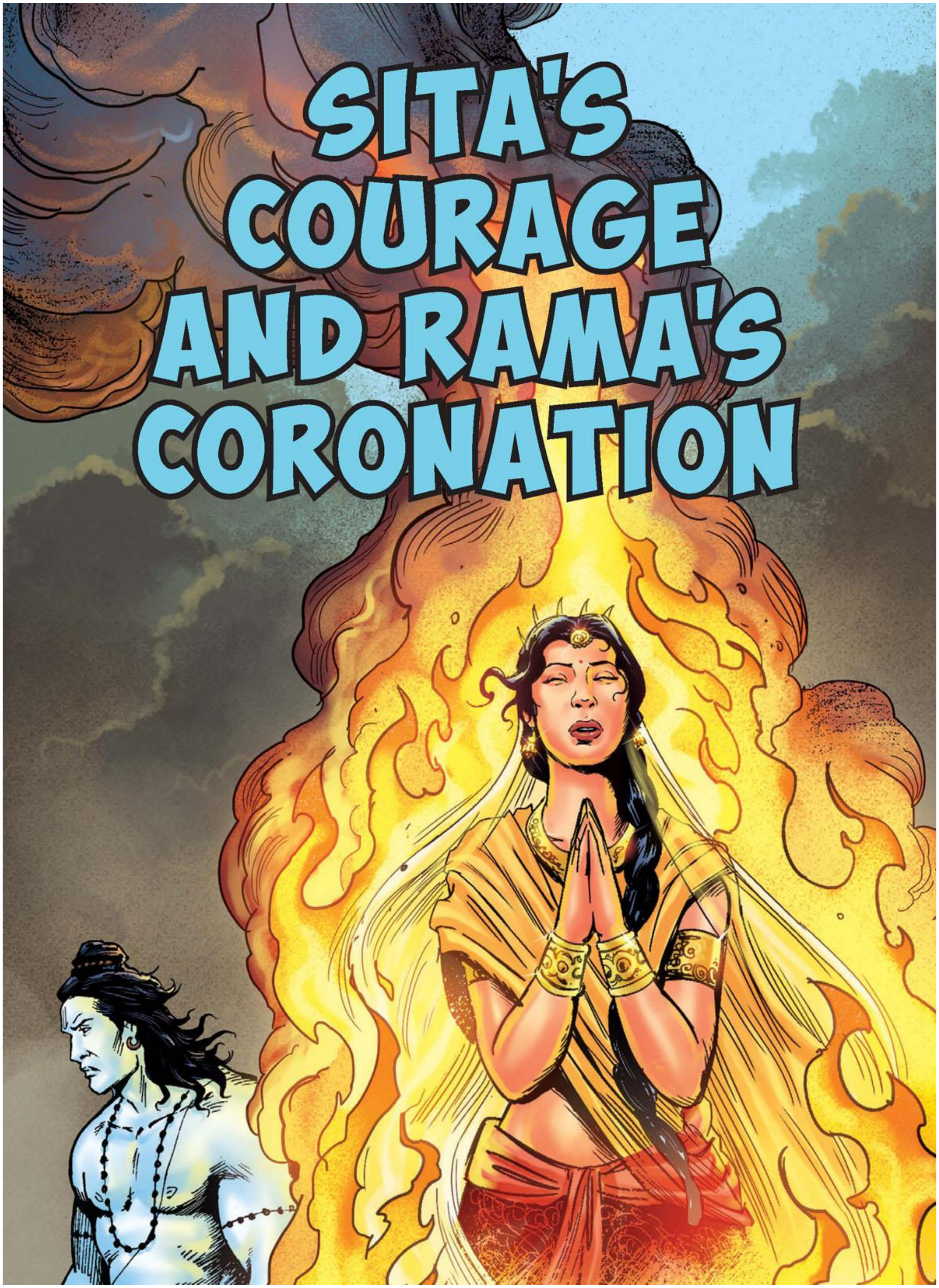

RAVANA'S WIVES WERE OVERCOME WITH GRIEF ON HEARING OF HIS DEATH. LED BY MANDODARI, HIS SENIOR AND MOST BELOVED WIFE, THEY RAN TO THE BATTLEFIELD.
ALAS! WE ARE WIDOWED, AND THE RAKSHASAS ARE RUINED!
YET THIS CATASTROPHE CAME TO HIM FROM A MORTAL WHO ARRIVED ON FOOT! IF ONLY YOU HAD HEEDED VIBHISHANA'S ADVICE!
HERE LIES THE FEARLESS WARRIOR WHO COULD NOT BE KILLED BY DEVAS, ASURAS OR NAGAS.
OH KING, WHY DO YOU NOT SPEAK TO ME - YOUR OLD PLAYMATE, MANDODARI? YOUR SINFUL CONDUCT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT YOUR DOWNFALL. BUT NO MORTAL COULD HAVE DEFEATED YOU. SURELY IT WAS LORD VISHNU, IN THE FORM OF RAMA, WHO DESTROYED YOU.

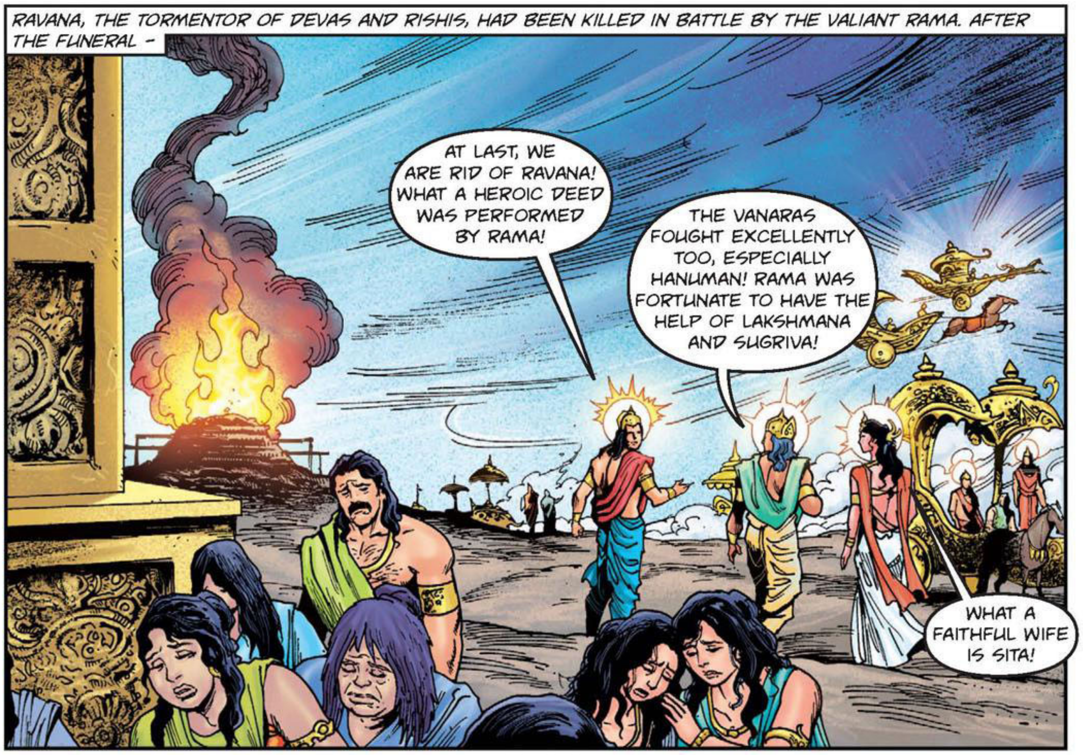

MANDODARI WAS INCONSOLABLE.
YOUR CHARMING FACE AND SPARKLING EYES DO NOT SHINE ANYMORE! I WAS SO PROUD OF MY FATHER MAYA, MY BRILLIANT HUSBAND, AND MY SON INDRAJIT. NOW YOUR FOLLY HAS SUBMERGED ME IN AN OCEAN OF GRIEF. I MUST BE MADE OF STONE THAT I DO NOT DIE OF SORROW!
YOU KNOW THAT THE FORTUNE OF KINGS IS ALWAYS UNCERTAIN, O QUEEN.
LET THE WOMENFOLK BE COMFORTED AND FUNERAL RITES BE PERFORMED FOR YOUR BROTHER.
I CANNOT PERFORM THE FUNERAL RITES FOR ONE WHO WAS CRUEL, MERCILESS AND UNTRUE. THOUGH HE WAS MY ELDER BROTHER, I CANNOT RESPECT HIM!
MY VICTORY WAS DUE PARTLY TO YOUR HELP. THEREFORE I SAY THIS FOR YOUR GOOD, O LORD OF RAKSHASAS! THOUGH RAVANA WAS FALSE AND EVIL, HE WAS ENERGETIC, MIGHTY AND HEROIC IN BATTLE. HE DESERVES TO HAVE ALL THE RITES PERFORMED BY YOU WITHOUT DELAY.

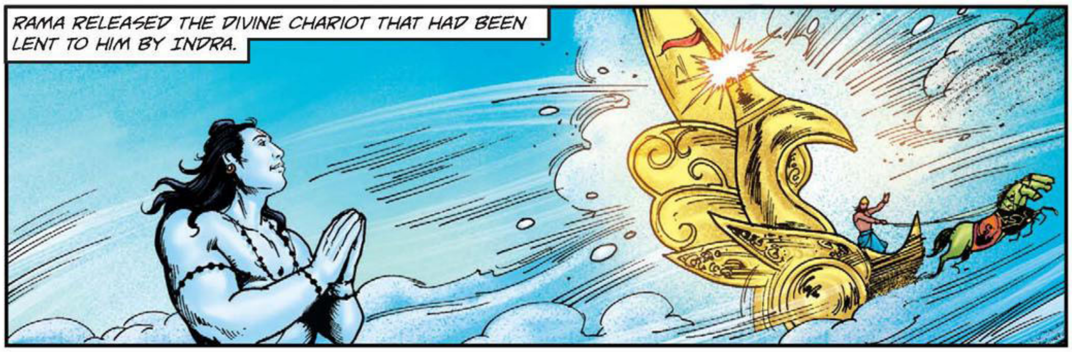

TAKING RAMA'S ADVICE TO HEART, VIBHISHANA ORGANISED A GRAND FUNERAL FOR RAVANA...

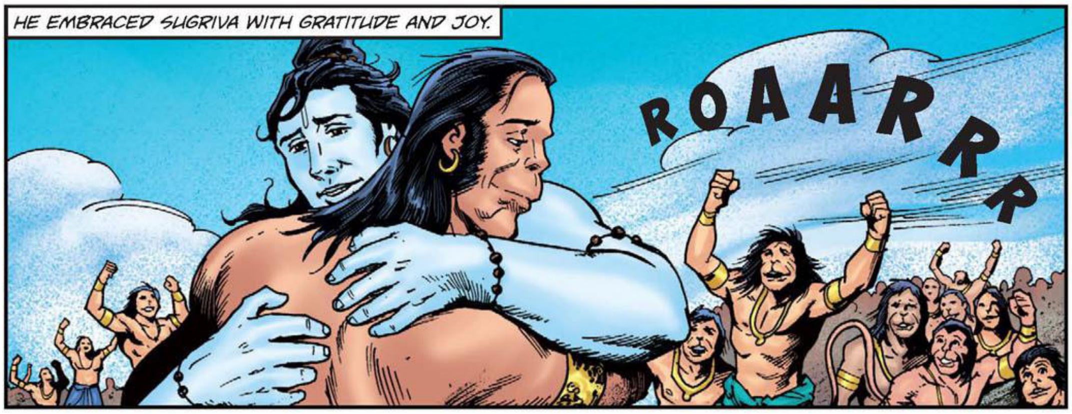

...AND LANKA BID A TEARFUL FAREWELL TO RAVANA, KING OF THE RAKSHASAS.

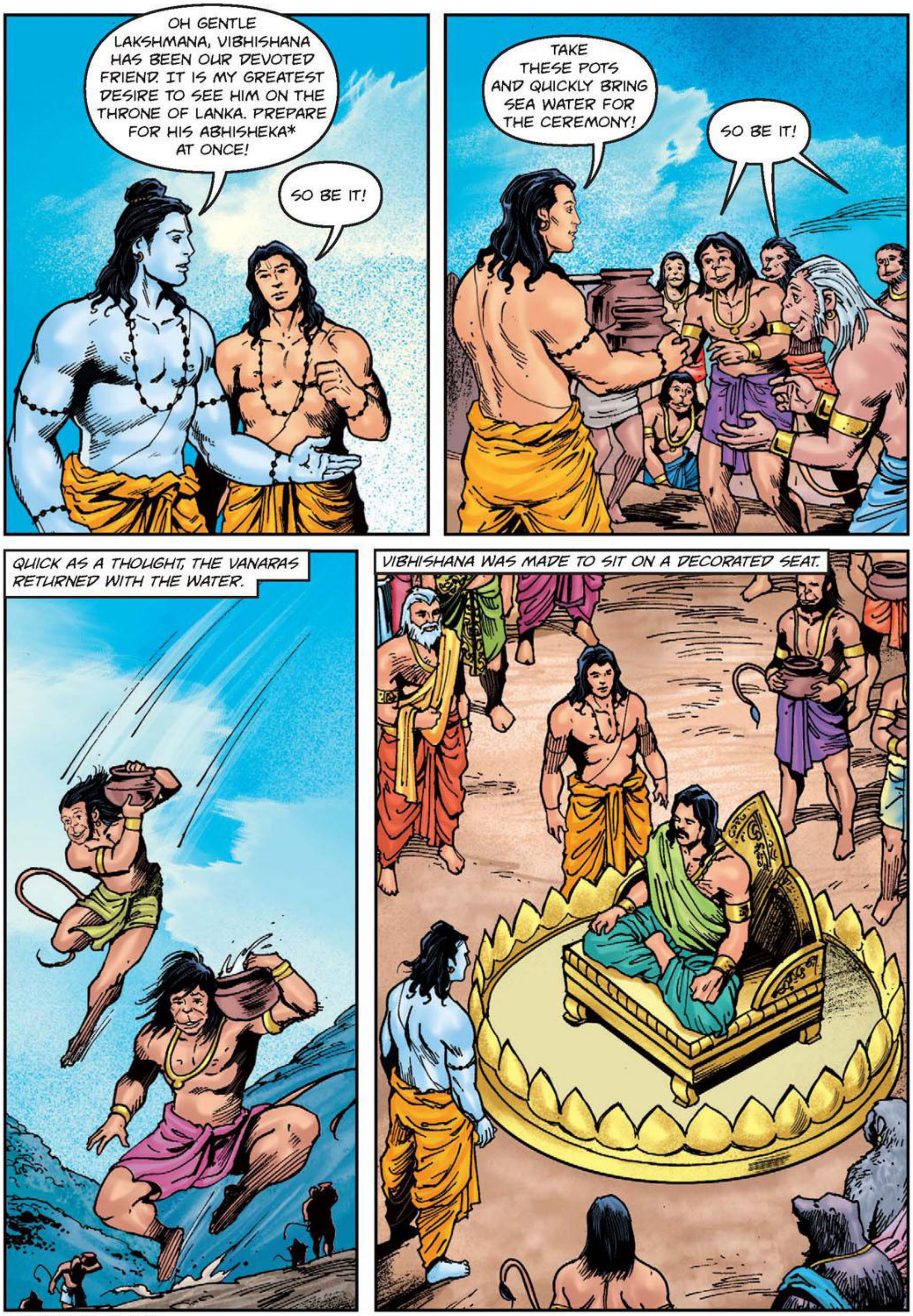
SITA'S COURAGE AND RAMA'S CORONATION



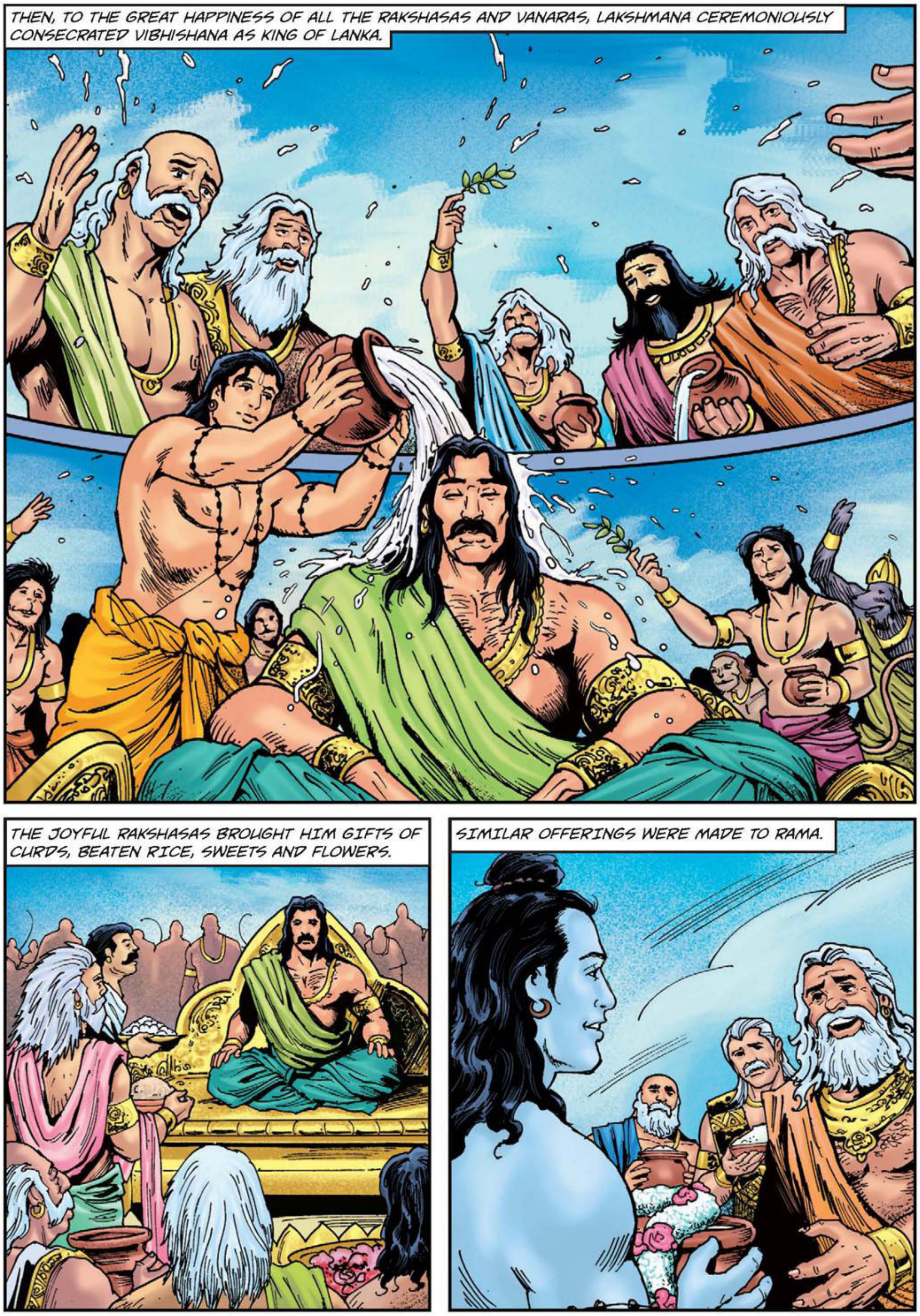

RAVANA, THE TORMENTOR OF DEVAS AND RISHIS, HAD BEEN KILLED IN BATTLE BY THE VALIANT RAMA. AFTER THE FUNERAL -
AT LAST, WE ARE RID OF RAVANA! WHAT A HEROIC DEED WAS PERFORMED BY RAMA!
THE VANARAS FOUGHT EXCELLENTLY TOO, ESPECIALLY HANUMAN! RAMA WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE THE HELP OF LAKSHMANA AND SUGRIVA!
WHAT A FAITHFUL WIFE IS SITA!

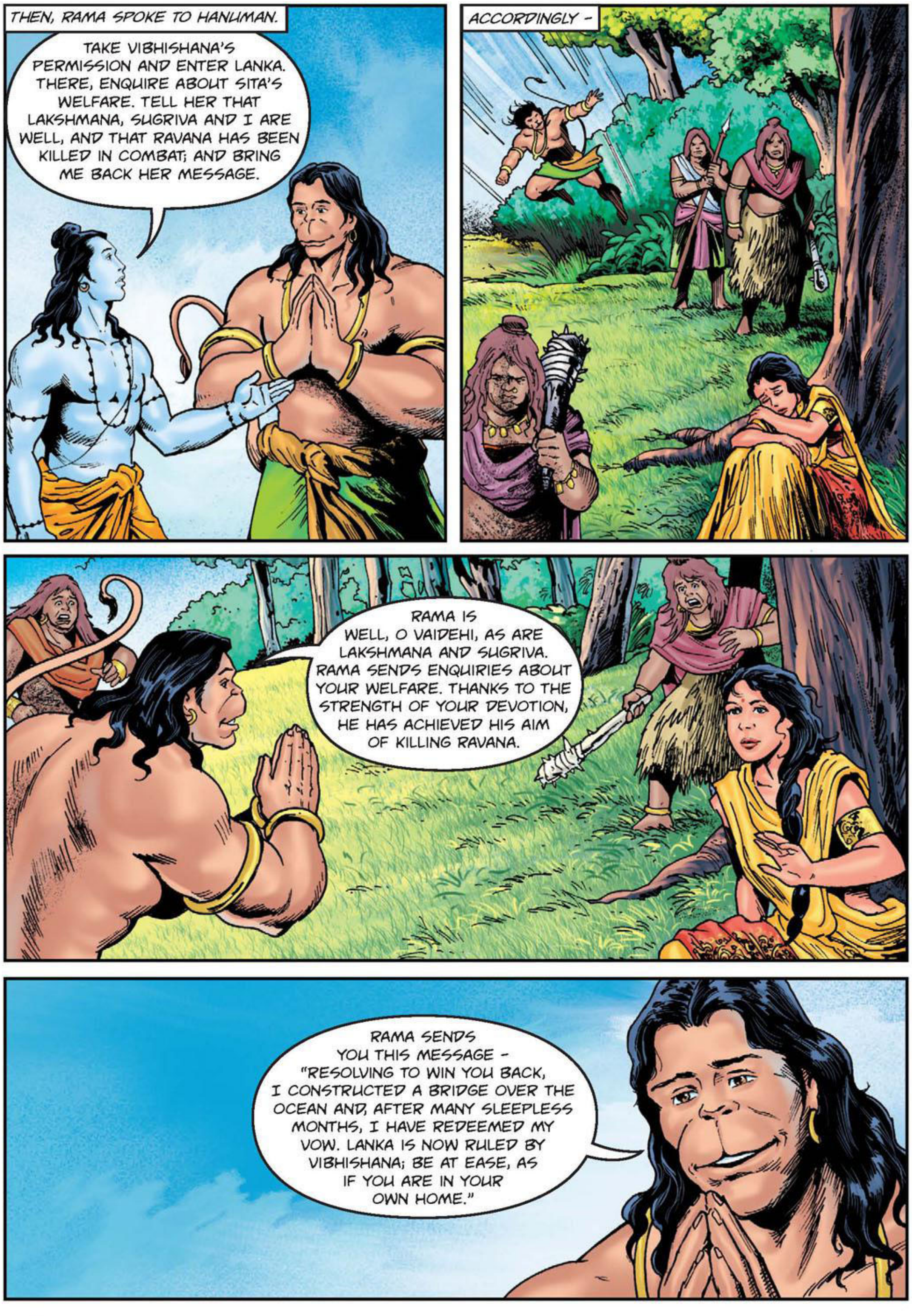

RAMA RELEASED THE DIVINE CHARIOT THAT HAD BEEN LENT TO HIM BY INDRA.

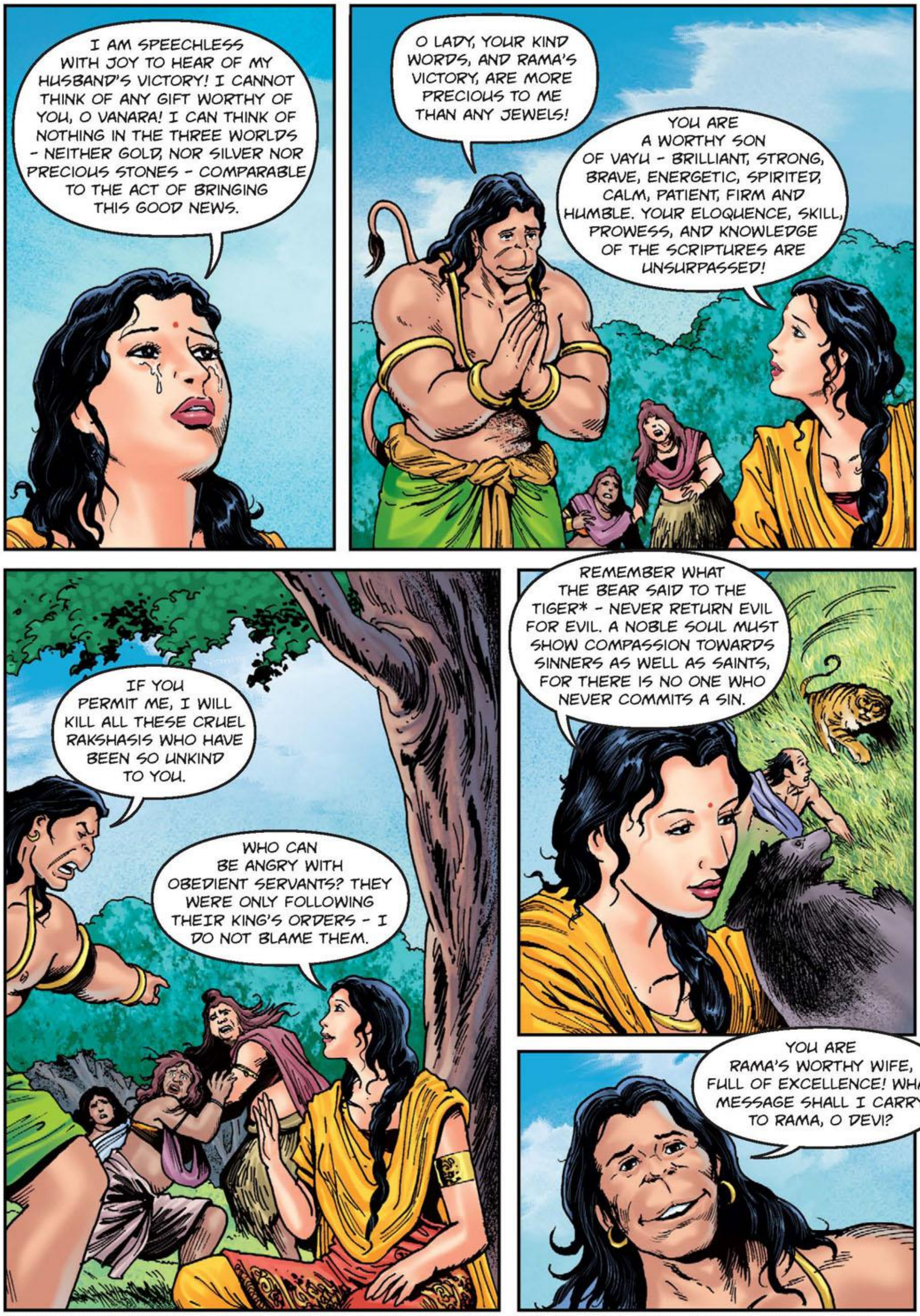

HE EMBRACED SUGRIVA WITH GRATITUDE AND JOY.
ROAARRR


OH GENTLE LAKSHMANA, VIBHISHANA HAS BEEN OUR DEVOTED FRIEND. IT IS MY GREATEST DESIRE TO SEE HIM ON THE THRONE OF LANKA. PREPARE FOR HIS ABHISHEKA* AT ONCE!
SO BE IT!
TAKE THESE POTS AND QUICKLY BRING SEA WATER FOR THE CEREMONY!
SO BE IT!
QUICK AS A THOUGHT, THE VANARAS RETURNED WITH THE WATER.
VIBHISHANA WAS MADE TO SIT ON A DECORATED SEAT.

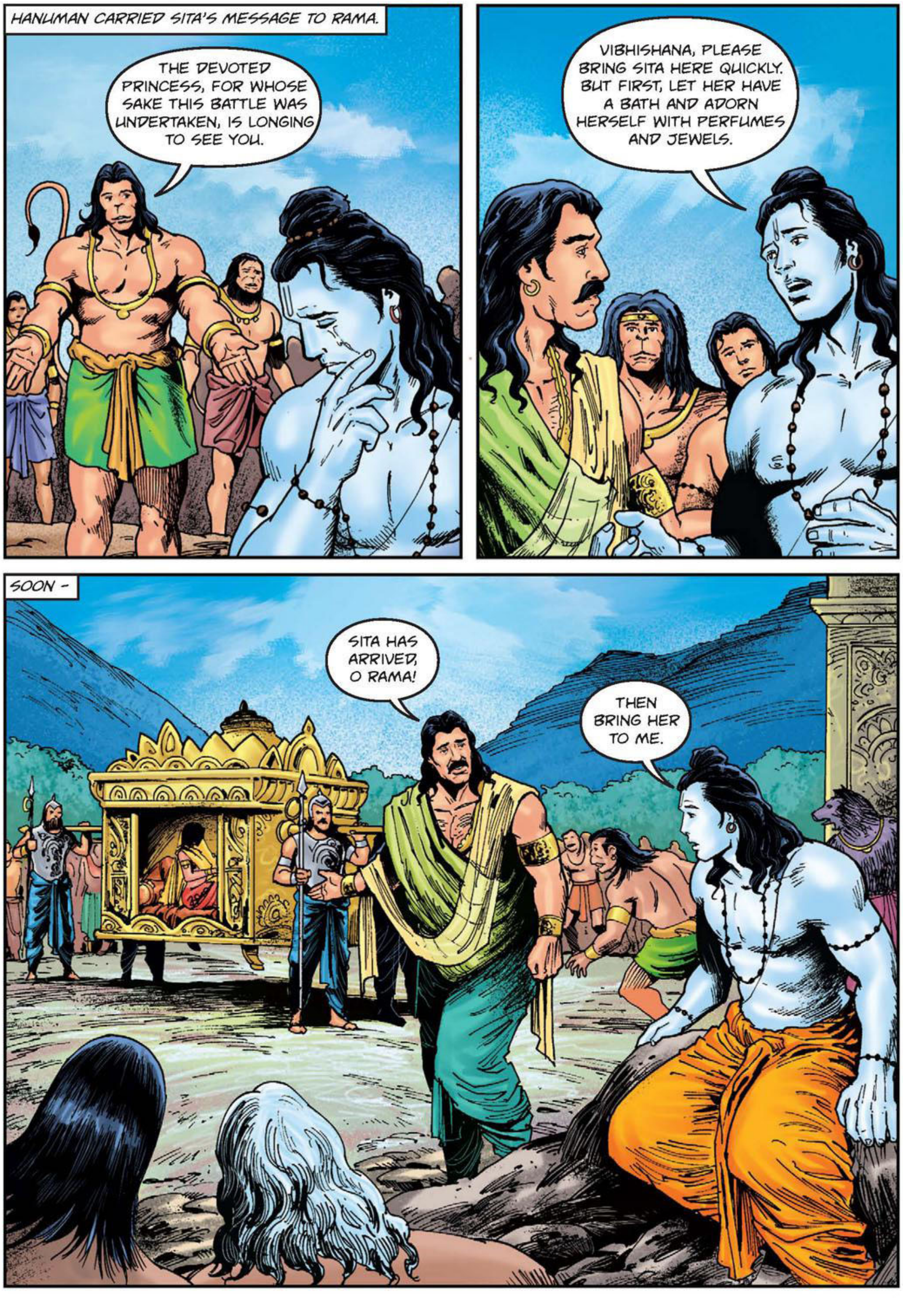
*ANOINTING AS KING

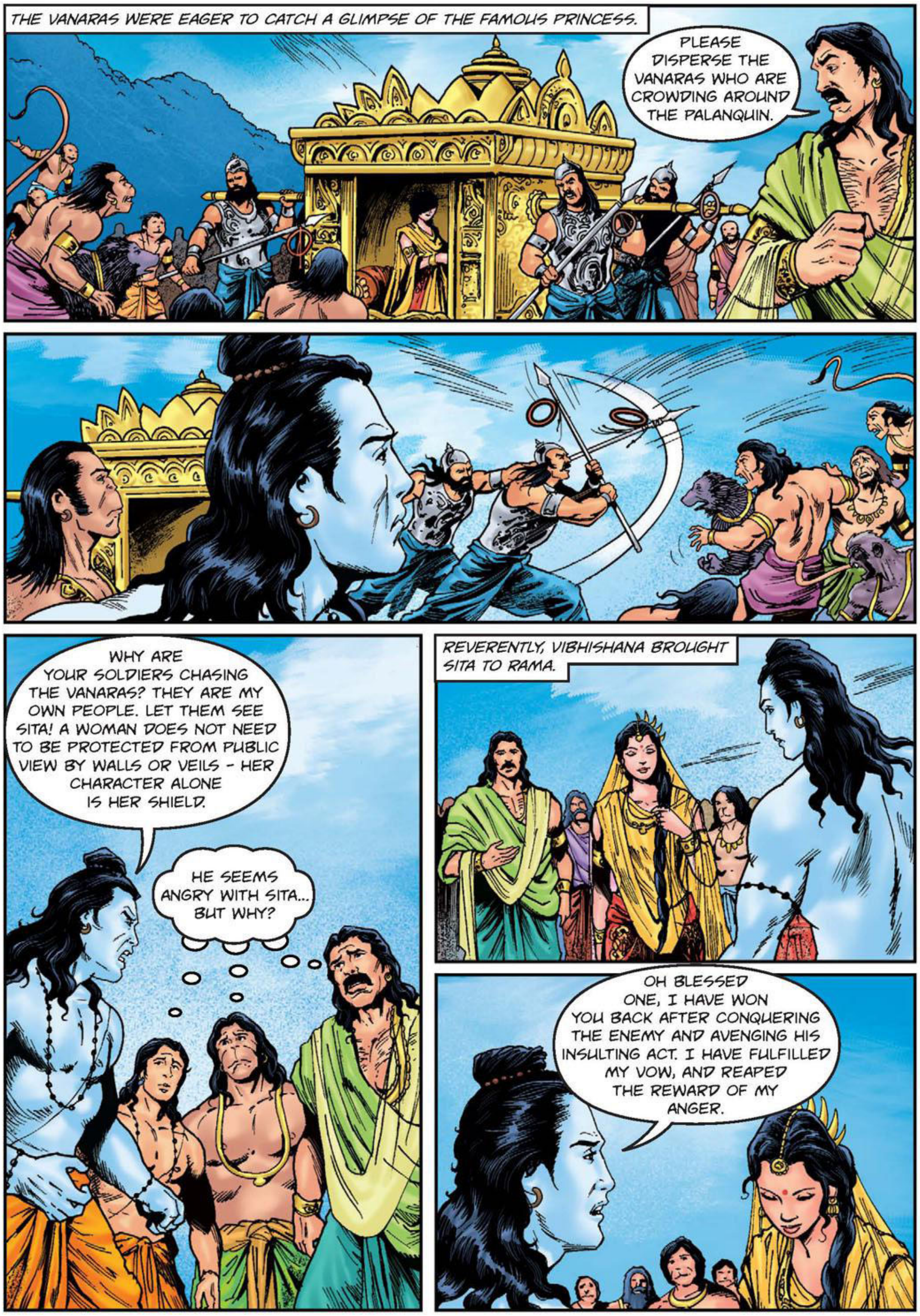

THEN, TO THE GREAT HAPPINESS OF ALL THE RAKSHASAS AND VANARAS, LAKSHMANA CEREMONIOUSLY CONSECRATED VIBHISHANA AS KING OF LANKA.
THE JOYFUL RAKSHASAS BROUGHT HIM GIFTS OF CURDS, BEATEN RICE, SWEETS AND FLOWERS.
SIMILAR OFFERINGS WERE MADE TO RAMA.

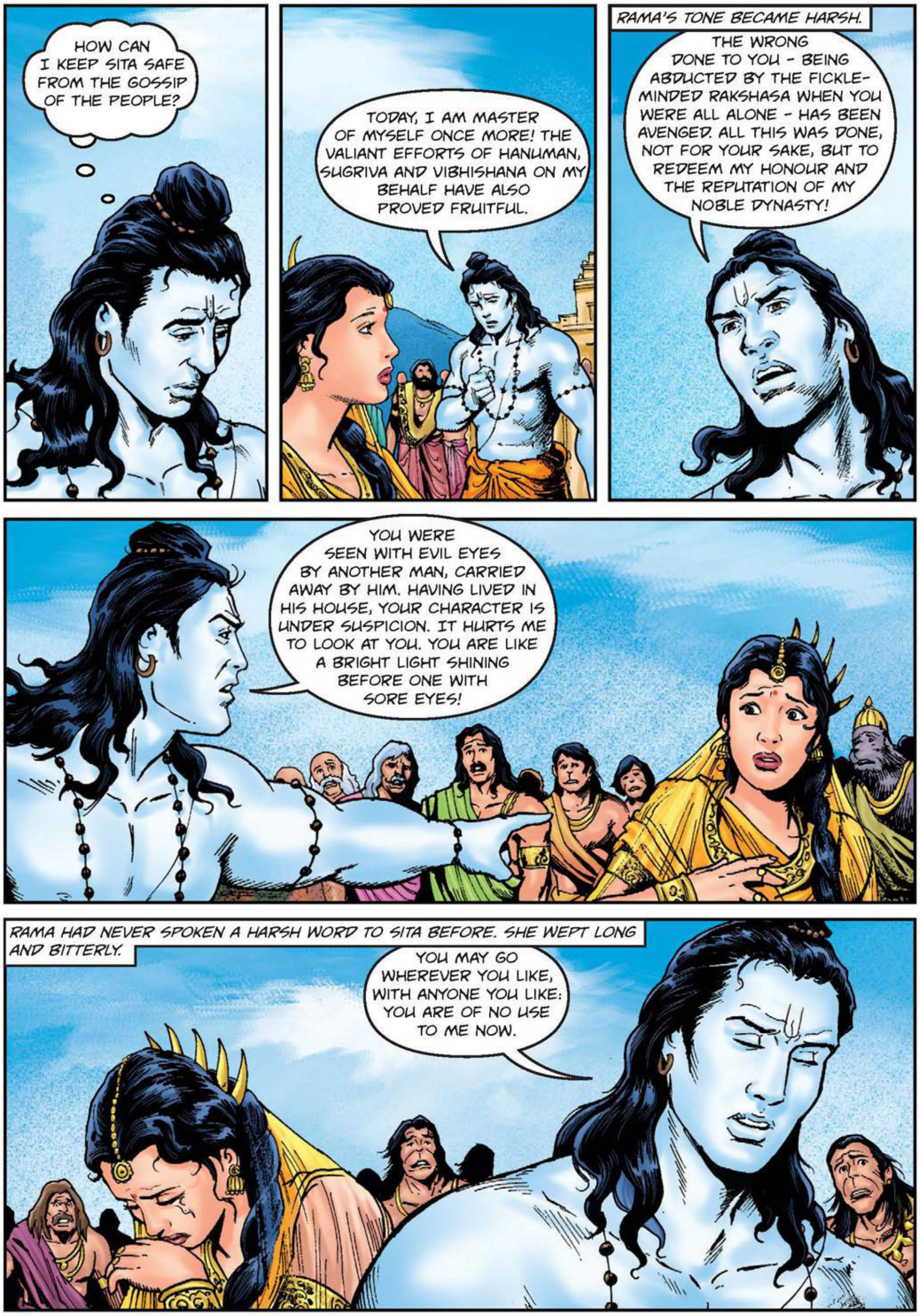

THEN, RAMA SPOKE TO HANUMAN.
TAKE VIBHISHANA'S PERMISSION AND ENTER LANKA. THERE, ENQUIRE ABOUT SITA'S WELFARE. TELL HER THAT LAKSHMANA, SUGRIVA AND I ARE WELL, AND THAT RAVANA HAS BEEN KILLED IN COMBAT; AND BRING ME BACK HER MESSAGE.
ACCORDINGLY -
RAMA IS WELL, O VAIDEHI, AS ARE LAKSHMANA AND SUGRIVA. RAMA SENDS ENQUIRIES ABOUT YOUR WELFARE. THANKS TO THE STRENGTH OF YOUR DEVOTION, HE HAS ACHIEVED HIS AIM OF KILLING RAVANA.
RAMA SENDS YOU THIS MESSAGE - "RESOLVING TO WIN YOU BACK, I CONSTRUCTED A BRIDGE OVER THE OCEAN AND, AFTER MANY SLEEPLESS MONTHS, I HAVE REDEEMED MY VOW. LANKA IS NOW RULED BY VIBHISHANA; BE AT EASE, AS IF YOU ARE IN YOUR OWN HOME."

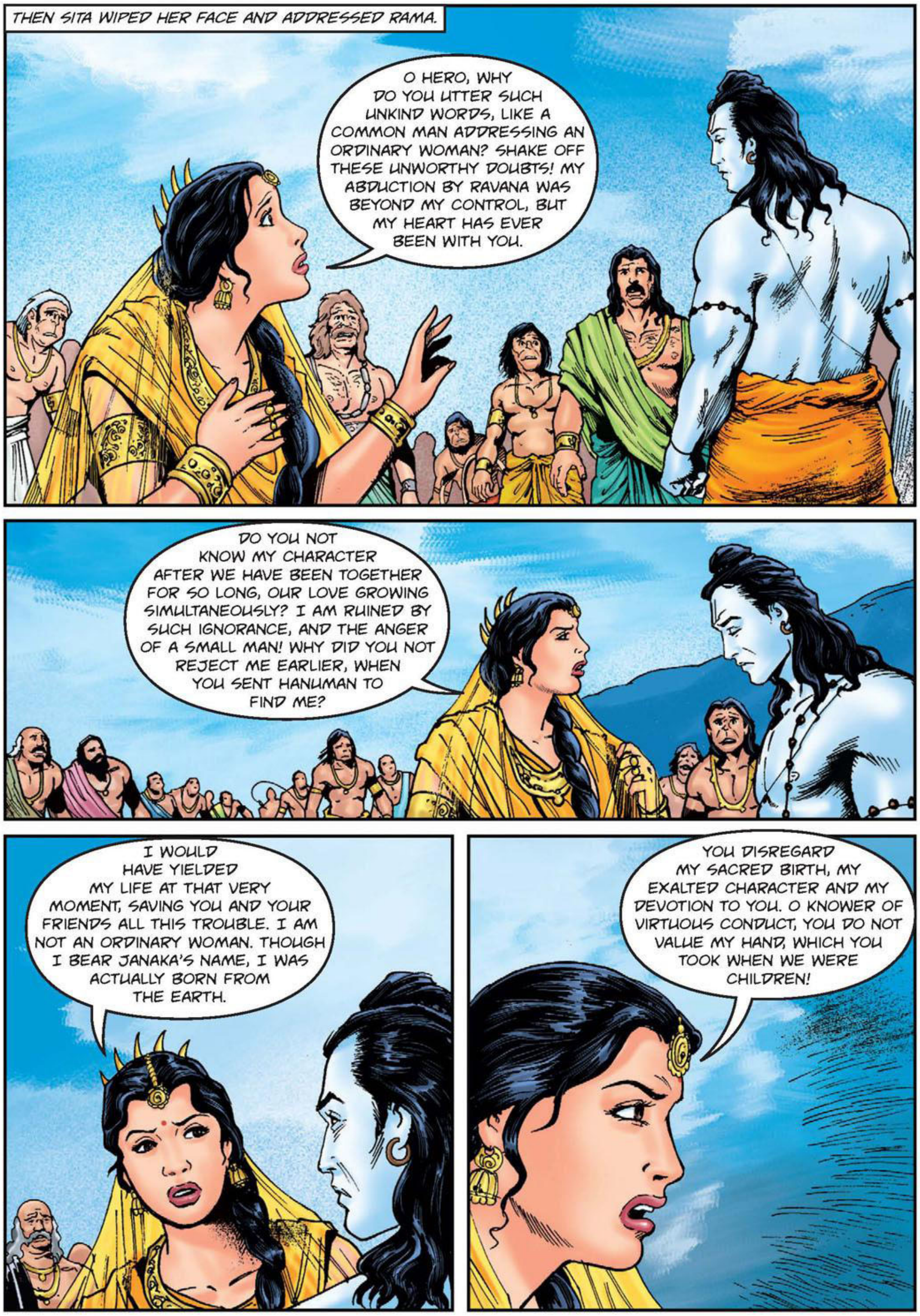

I AM SPEECHLESS WITH JOY TO HEAR OF MY HUSBAND'S VICTORY! I CANNOT THINK OF ANY GIFT WORTHY OF YOU, O VANARA! I CAN THINK OF NOTHING IN THE THREE WORLDS - NEITHER GOLD, NOR SILVER NOR PRECIOUS STONES - COMPARABLE TO THE ACT OF BRINGING THIS GOOD NEWS.
O LADY, YOUR KIND WORDS, AND RAMA'S VICTORY, ARE MORE PRECIOUS TO ME THAN ANY JEWELS!
YOU ARE A WORTHY SON OF VAYU - BRILLIANT, STRONG, BRAVE, ENERGETIC, SPIRITED, CALM, PATIENT, FIRM AND HUMBLE. YOUR ELOQUENCE, SKILL, PROWESS, AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCRIPTURES ARE UNSURPASSED!
IF YOU PERMIT ME, I WILL KILL ALL THESE CRUEL RAKSHASIS WHO HAVE BEEN SO UNKIND TO YOU.
WHO CAN BE ANGRY WITH OBEDIENT SERVANTS? THEY WERE ONLY FOLLOWING THEIR KING'S ORDERS - I DO NOT BLAME THEM.
REMEMBER WHAT THE BEAR SAID TO THE TIGER* - NEVER RETURN EVIL FOR EVIL. A NOBLE SOUL MUST SHOW COMPASSION TOWARDS SINNERS AS WELL AS SAINTS, FOR THERE IS NO ONE WHO NEVER COMMITS A SIN.
YOU ARE RAMA'S WORTHY WIFE, FULL OF EXCELLENCE! WHAT MESSAGE SHALL I CARRY TO RAMA, O DEVI?

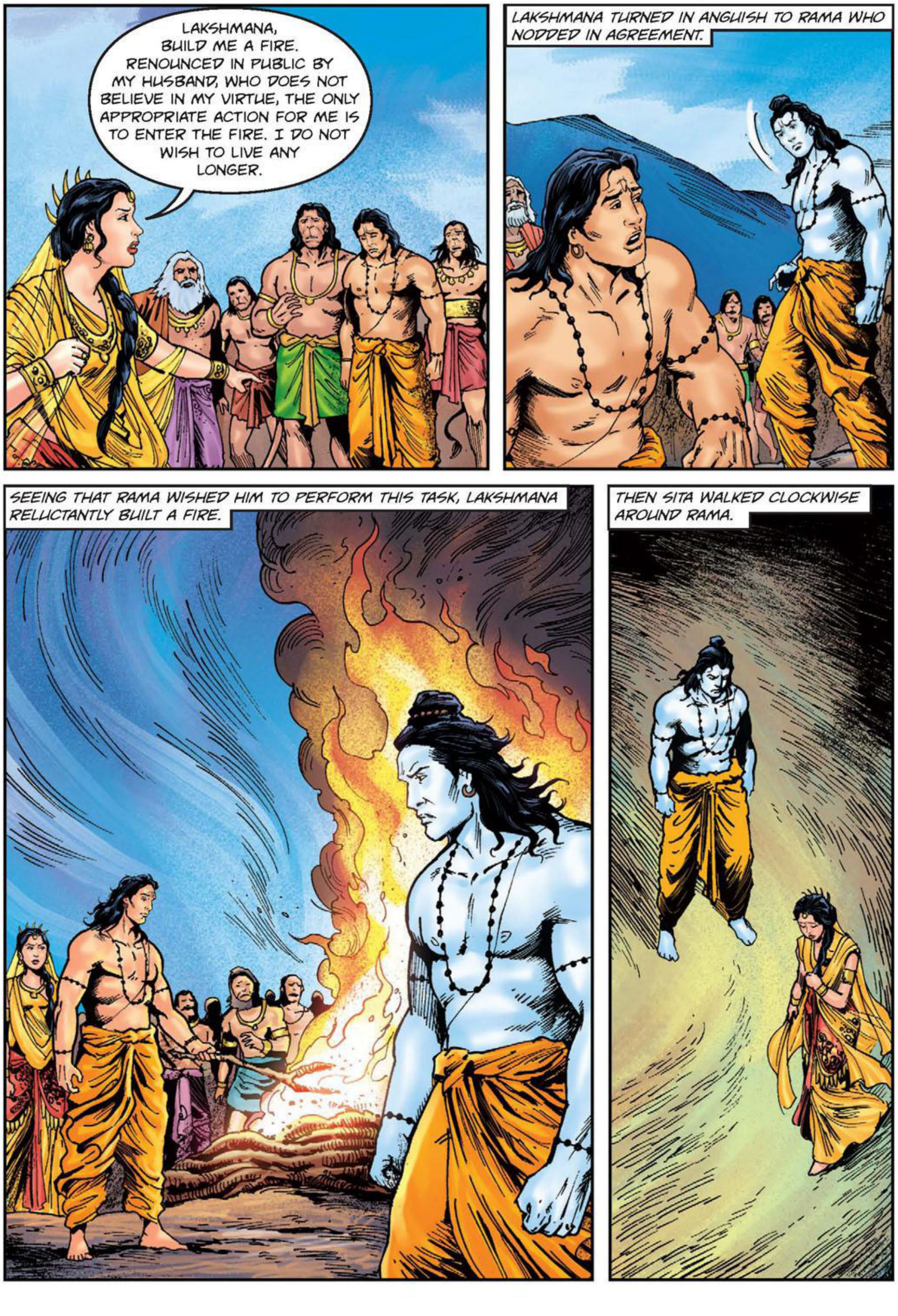
*SITA IS REFERRING TO A STORY IN WHICH A BEAR RESCUES A MAN FROM A TIGER. THE UNGRATEFUL MAN THROWS THE BEAR TO THE TIGER. THE BEAR SAVES HIMSELF. BUT WHEN THE TIGER ASKS THE BEAR TO HAND OVER THE MAN, WHO IS UNWORTHY OF HIS KINDNESS, THE BEAR REFUSES.

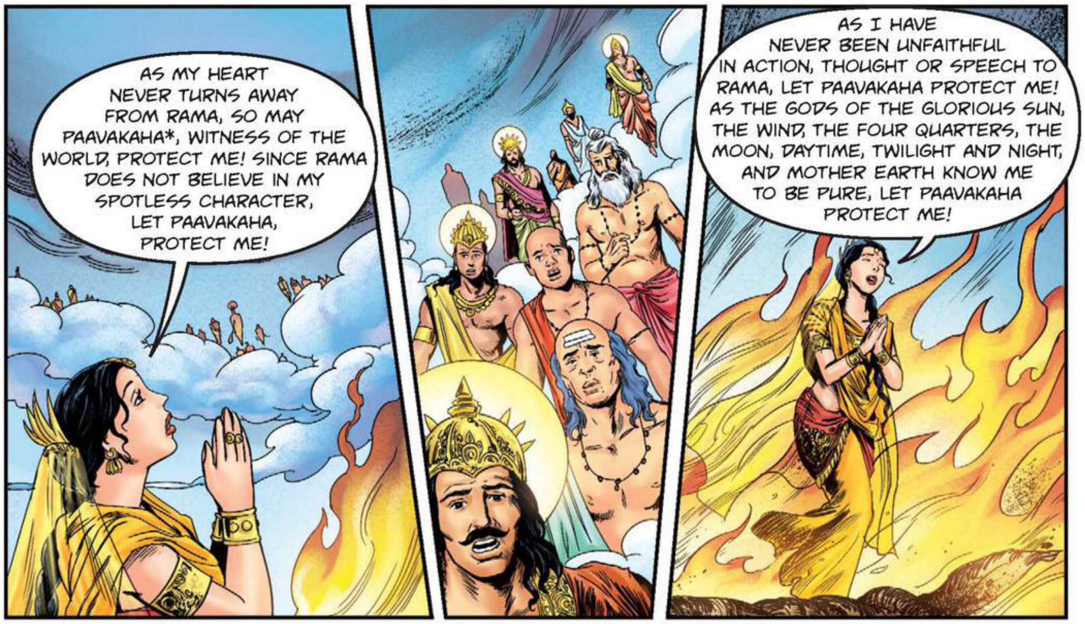

HANUMAN CARRIED SITA'S MESSAGE TO RAMA.
THE DEVOTED PRINCESS, FOR WHOSE SAKE THIS BATTLE WAS UNDERTAKEN, IS LONGING TO SEE YOU.
VIBHISHANA, PLEASE BRING SITA HERE QUICKLY. BUT FIRST, LET HER HAVE A BATH AND ADORN HERSELF WITH PERFUMES AND JEWELS.
SOON -
SITA HAS ARRIVED, O RAMA!
THEN BRING HER TO ME.

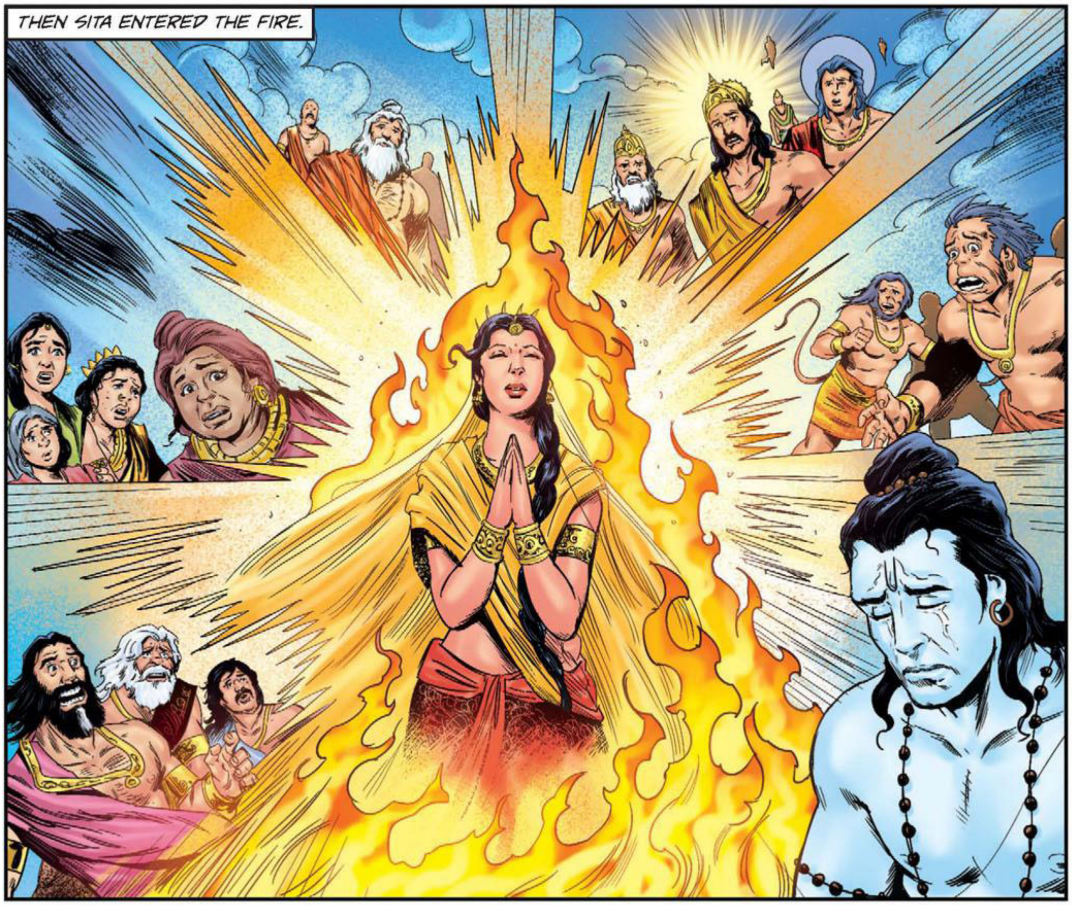

THE VANARAS WERE EAGER TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE FAMOUS PRINCESS.
PLEASE DISPERSE THE VANARAS WHO ARE CROWDING AROUND THE PALANQUIN.
WHY ARE YOUR SOLDIERS CHASING THE VANARAS? THEY ARE MY OWN PEOPLE. LET THEM SEE SITA! A WOMAN DOES NOT NEED TO BE PROTECTED FROM PUBLIC VIEW BY WALLS OR VEILS - HER CHARACTER ALONE IS HER SHIELD.
HE SEEMS ANGRY WITH SITA... BUT WHY?
REVERENTLY, VIBHISHANA BROUGHT SITA TO RAMA.
OH BLESSED ONE, I HAVE WON YOU BACK AFTER CONQUERING THE ENEMY AND AVENGING HIS INSULTING ACT. I HAVE FULFILLED MY VOW, AND REAPED THE REWARD OF MY ANGER.


HOW CAN I KEEP SITA SAFE FROM THE GOSSIP OF THE PEOPLE?
TODAY, I AM MASTER OF MYSELF ONCE MORE! THE VALIANT EFFORTS OF HANUMAN, SUGRIVA AND VIBHISHANA ON MY BEHALF HAVE ALSO PROVED FRUITFUL.
RAMA'S TONE BECAME HARSH.
THE WRONG DONE TO YOU - BEING ABDUCTED BY THE FICKLE-MINDED RAKSHASA WHEN YOU WERE ALL ALONE - HAS BEEN AVENGED. ALL THIS WAS DONE, NOT FOR YOUR SAKE, BUT TO REDEEM MY HONOUR AND THE REPUTATION OF MY NOBLE DYNASTY!
YOU WERE SEEN WITH EVIL EYES BY ANOTHER MAN, CARRIED AWAY BY HIM. HAVING LIVED IN HIS HOUSE, YOUR CHARACTER IS UNDER SUSPICION. IT HURTS ME TO LOOK AT YOU. YOU ARE LIKE A BRIGHT LIGHT SHINING BEFORE ONE WITH SORE EYES!
RAMA HAD NEVER SPOKEN A HARSH WORD TO SITA BEFORE. SHE WEPT LONG AND BITTERLY.
YOU MAY GO WHEREVER YOU LIKE, WITH ANYONE YOU LIKE: YOU ARE OF NO USE TO ME NOW.

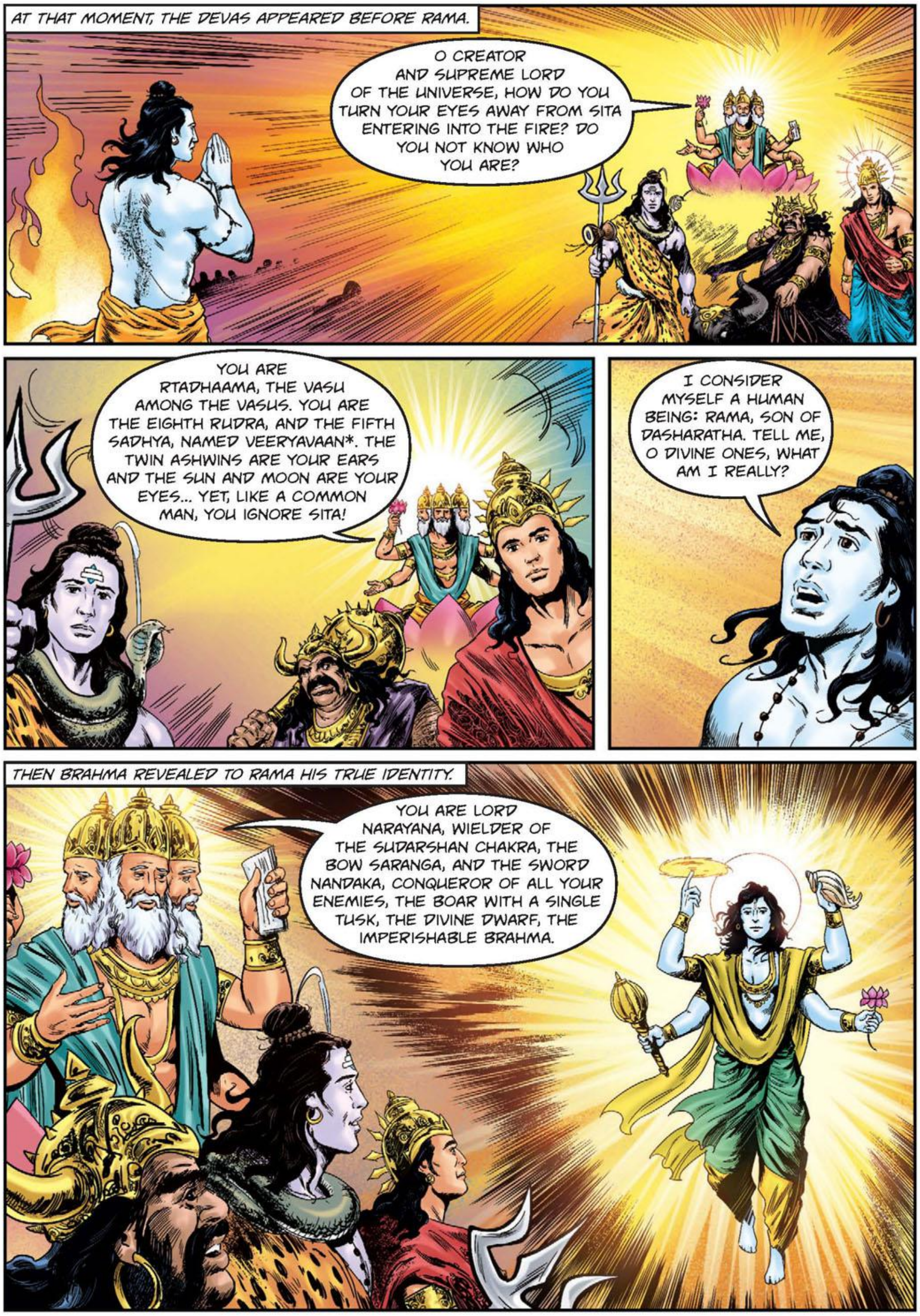

THEN SITA WIPED HER FACE AND ADDRESSED RAMA.
O HERO, WHY DO YOU UTTER SUCH UNKIND WORDS, LIKE A COMMON MAN ADDRESSING AN ORDINARY WOMAN? SHAKE OFF THESE UNWORTHY DOUBTS! MY ABDUCTION BY RAVANA WAS BEYOND MY CONTROL, BUT MY HEART HAS EVER BEEN WITH YOU.
DO YOU NOT KNOW MY CHARACTER AFTER WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOR SO LONG, OUR LOVE GROWING SIMULTANEOUSLY? I AM RUINED BY SUCH IGNORANCE, AND THE ANGER OF A SMALL MAN! WHY DID YOU NOT REJECT ME EARLIER, WHEN YOU SENT HANUMAN TO FIND ME?
I WOULD HAVE YIELDED MY LIFE AT THAT VERY MOMENT, SAVING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS ALL THIS TROUBLE. I AM NOT AN ORDINARY WOMAN. THOUGH I BEAR JANAKA'S NAME, I WAS ACTUALLY BORN FROM THE EARTH.
YOU DISREGARD MY SACRED BIRTH, MY EXALTED CHARACTER AND MY DEVOTION TO YOU. O KNOWER OF VIRTUOUS CONDUCT, YOU DO NOT VALUE MY HAND, WHICH YOU TOOK WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN!


LAKSHMANA, BUILD ME A FIRE. RENOUNCED IN PUBLIC BY MY HUSBAND, WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN MY VIRTUE, THE ONLY APPROPRIATE ACTION FOR ME IS TO ENTER THE FIRE. I DO NOT WISH TO LIVE ANY LONGER.
LAKSHMANA TURNED IN ANGUISH TO RAMA WHO NODDED IN AGREEMENT.
SEEING THAT RAMA WISHED HIM TO PERFORM THIS TASK, LAKSHMANA RELUCTANTLY BUILT A FIRE.
THEN SITA WALKED CLOCKWISE AROUND RAMA.


AS MY HEART NEVER TURNS AWAY FROM RAMA, SO MAY PAAVAKAHA*, WITNESS OF THE WORLD, PROTECT ME! SINCE RAMA DOES NOT BELIEVE IN MY SPOTLESS CHARACTER, LET PAAVAKAHA, PROTECT ME!
AS I HAVE NEVER BEEN UNFAITHFUL IN ACTION, THOUGHT OR SPEECH TO RAMA, LET PAAVAKAHA PROTECT ME! AS THE GODS OF THE GLORIOUS SUN, THE WIND, THE FOUR QUARTERS, THE MOON, DAYTIME, TWILIGHT AND NIGHT, AND MOTHER EARTH KNOW ME TO BE PURE, LET PAAVAKAHA PROTECT ME!


THEN SITA ENTERED THE FIRE.

*THE GOD OF FIRE


AT THAT MOMENT, THE DEVAS APPEARED BEFORE RAMA.
O CREATOR AND SUPREME LORD OF THE UNIVERSE, HOW DO YOU TURN YOUR EYES AWAY FROM SITA ENTERING INTO THE FIRE? DO YOU NOT KNOW WHO YOU ARE?
YOU ARE RTADHAAMA, THE VASU AMONG THE VASUS. YOU ARE THE EIGHTH RUDRA, AND THE FIFTH SADHYA, NAMED VEERYAVAAN*. THE TWIN ASHWINS ARE YOUR EARS AND THE SUN AND MOON ARE YOUR EYES... YET, LIKE A COMMON MAN, YOU IGNORE SITA!
I CONSIDER MYSELF A HUMAN BEING: RAMA, SON OF DASHARATHA. TELL ME, O DIVINE ONES, WHAT AM I REALLY?
THEN BRAHMA REVEALED TO RAMA HIS TRUE IDENTITY.
YOU ARE LORD NARAYANA, WIELDER OF THE SUDARSHAN CHAKRA, THE BOW SARANGA, AND THE SWORD NANDAKA, CONQUEROR OF ALL YOUR ENEMIES, THE BOAR WITH A SINGLE TUSK, THE DIVINE DWARF, THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMA.

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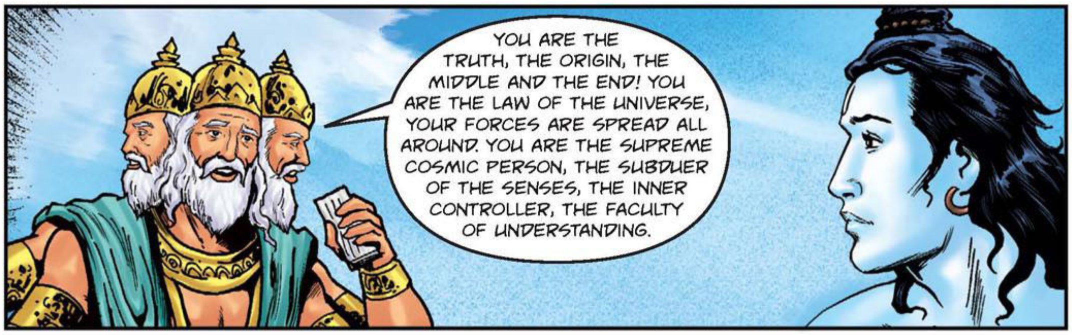
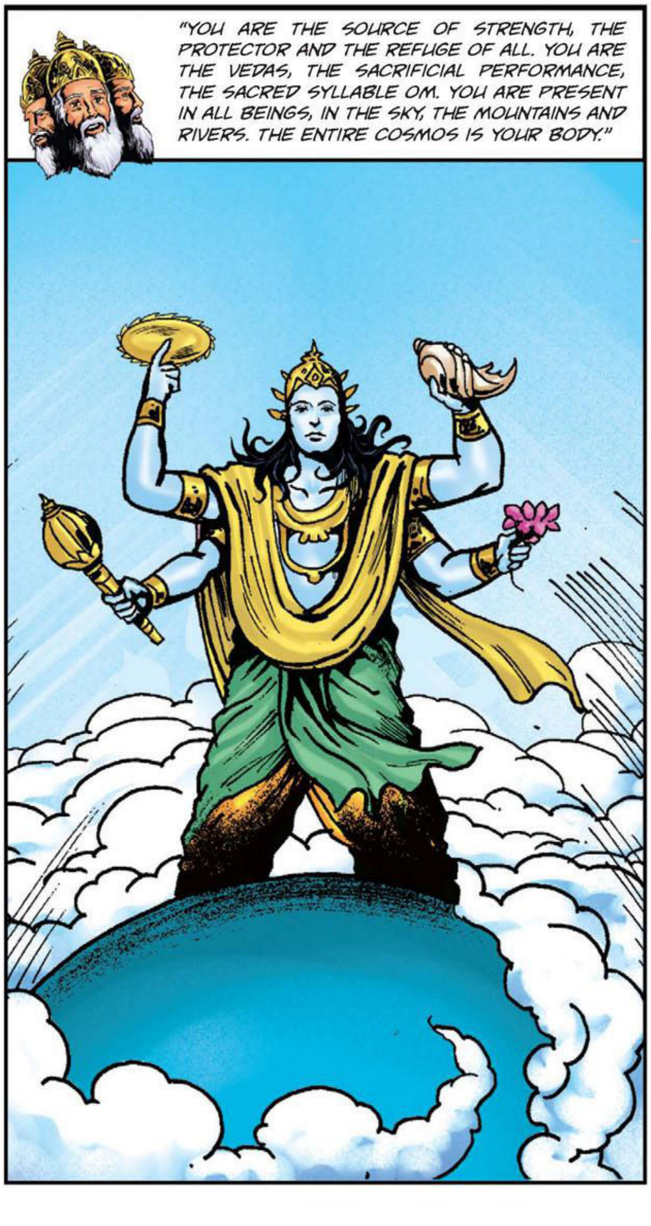
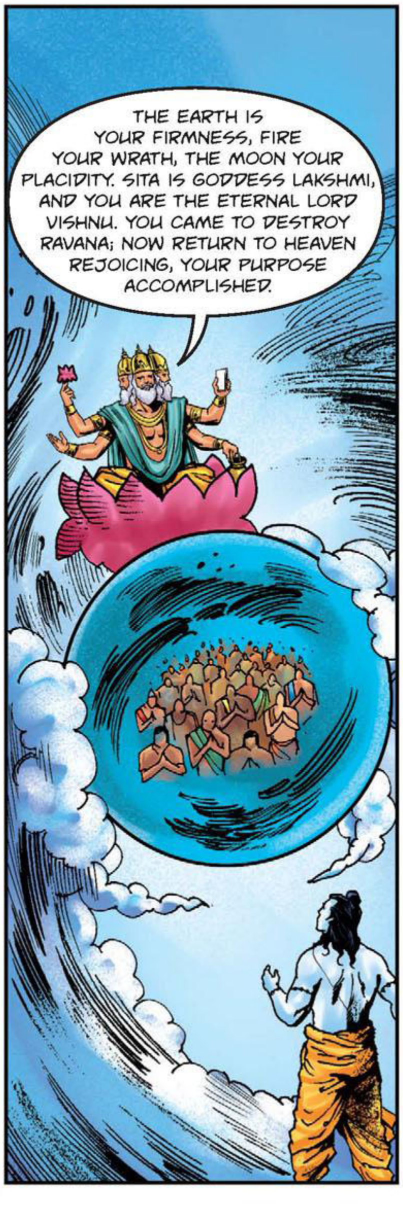
*THE EIGHT VASUS, ELEVEN RUDRAS AND TWELVE SADHYAS ARE CLASSES OF DIVINE BEINGS. AMONG THE VASUS, RTADHAAMA IS THE ABODE OF TRUTH.


YOU ARE THE TRUTH, THE ORIGIN, THE MIDDLE AND THE END! YOU ARE THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE, YOUR FORCES ARE SPREAD ALL AROUND. YOU ARE THE SUPREME COSMIC PERSON, THE SUBDUER OF THE SENSES, THE INNER CONTROLLER, THE FACULTY OF UNDERSTANDING.


"YOU ARE THE SOURCE OF STRENGTH, THE PROTECTOR AND THE REFUGE OF ALL. YOU ARE THE VEDAS, THE SACRIFICIAL PERFORMANCE, THE SACRED SYLLABLE OM. YOU ARE PRESENT IN ALL BEINGS, IN THE SKY, THE MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS. THE ENTIRE COSMOS IS YOUR BODY."

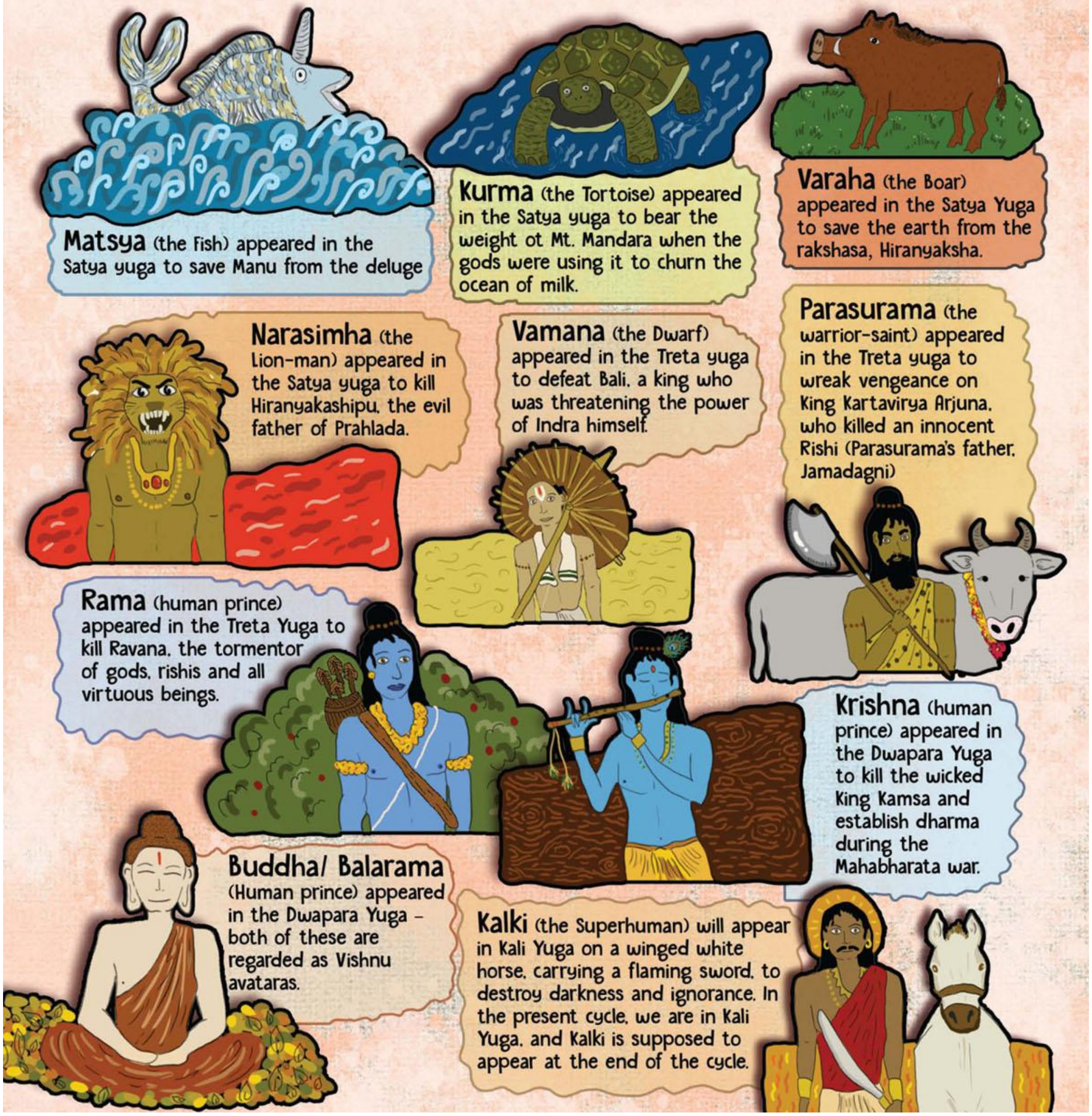

THE EARTH IS YOUR FIRMNESS, FIRE YOUR WRATH, THE MOON YOUR PLACIDITY. SITA IS GODDESS LAKSHMI, AND YOU ARE THE ETERNAL LORD VISHNU. YOU CAME TO DESTROY RAVANA; NOW RETURN TO HEAVEN REJOICING, YOUR PURPOSE ACCOMPLISHED.

DASHAVATARA

In the holy trinity of Hinduism, Brahma is the Creator, Shiva the Destroyer, and Vishnu the Protector. In this role, Lord Vishnu appears on the earth from time to time. In the Mahabharata, Lord Krishna says:

> Paritranaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam
> dharma–samsthapanarthaya sambhavami yuge yuge
>
> *(For the protection of the good, the destruction of the wicked,*
> *and the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.)*

There are supposed to be ten Avataras of Vishnu (Dashavatara) in the cycle of four yugas (Satya yuga, Treta yuga, Dwapara yuga and Kali yuga).



Matsya (the Fish) appeared in the Satya yuga to save Manu from the deluge

Kurma (the Tortoise) appeared in the Satya yuga to bear the weight ot Mt. Mandara when the gods were using it to churn the ocean of milk.

Varaha (the Boar) appeared in the Satya Yuga to save the earth from the rakshasa, Hiranyaksha.

Narasimha (the Lion-man) appeared in the Satya yuga to kill Hiranyakashipu, the evil father of Prahlada.

Vamana (the Dwarf) appeared in the Treta yuga to defeat Bali, a king who was threatening the power of Indra himself.

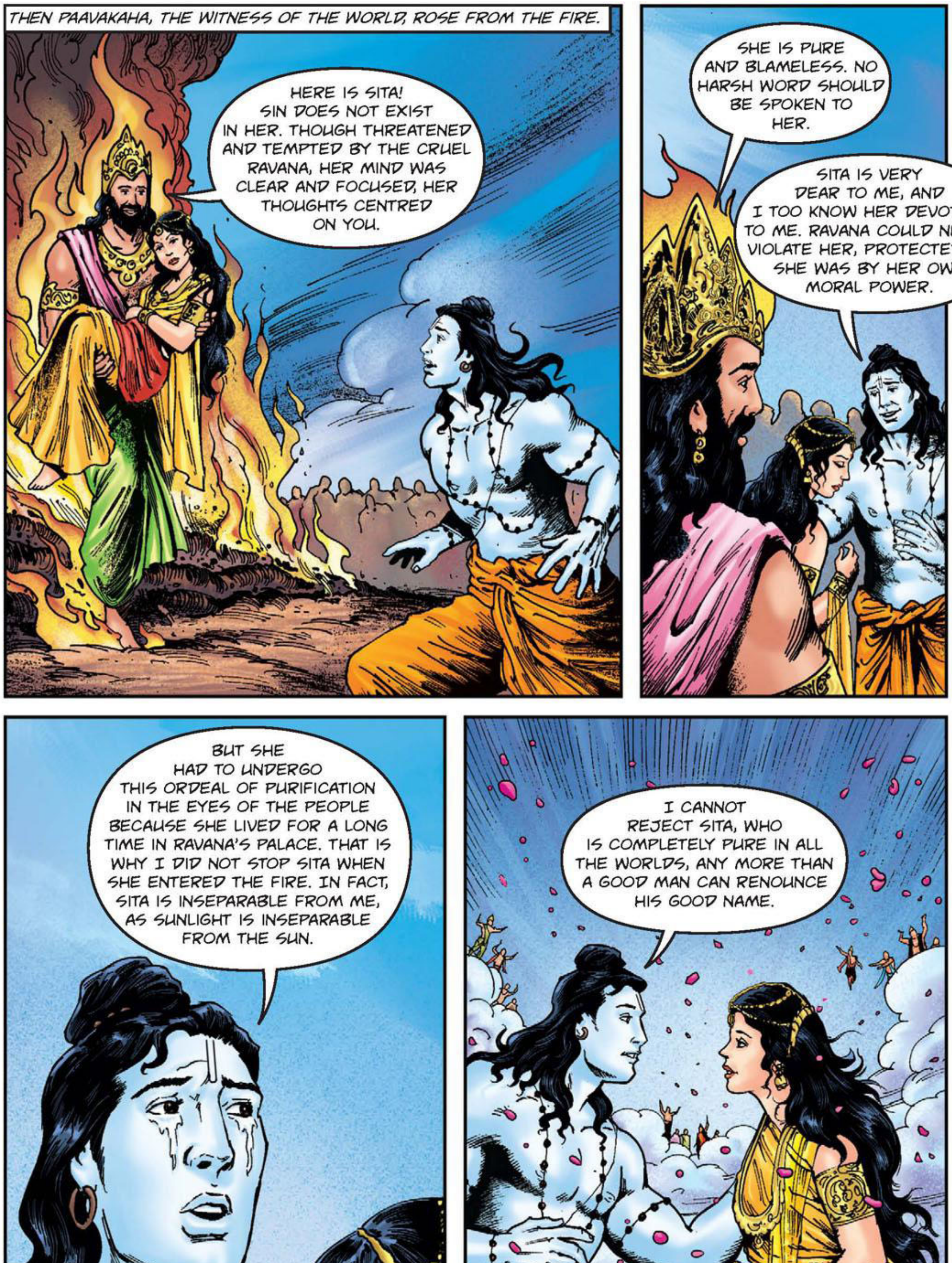
Parasurama (the warrior-saint) appeared in the Treta yuga to wreak vengeance on King Kartavirya Arjuna, who killed an innocent Rishi (Parasurama's father, Jamadagni)

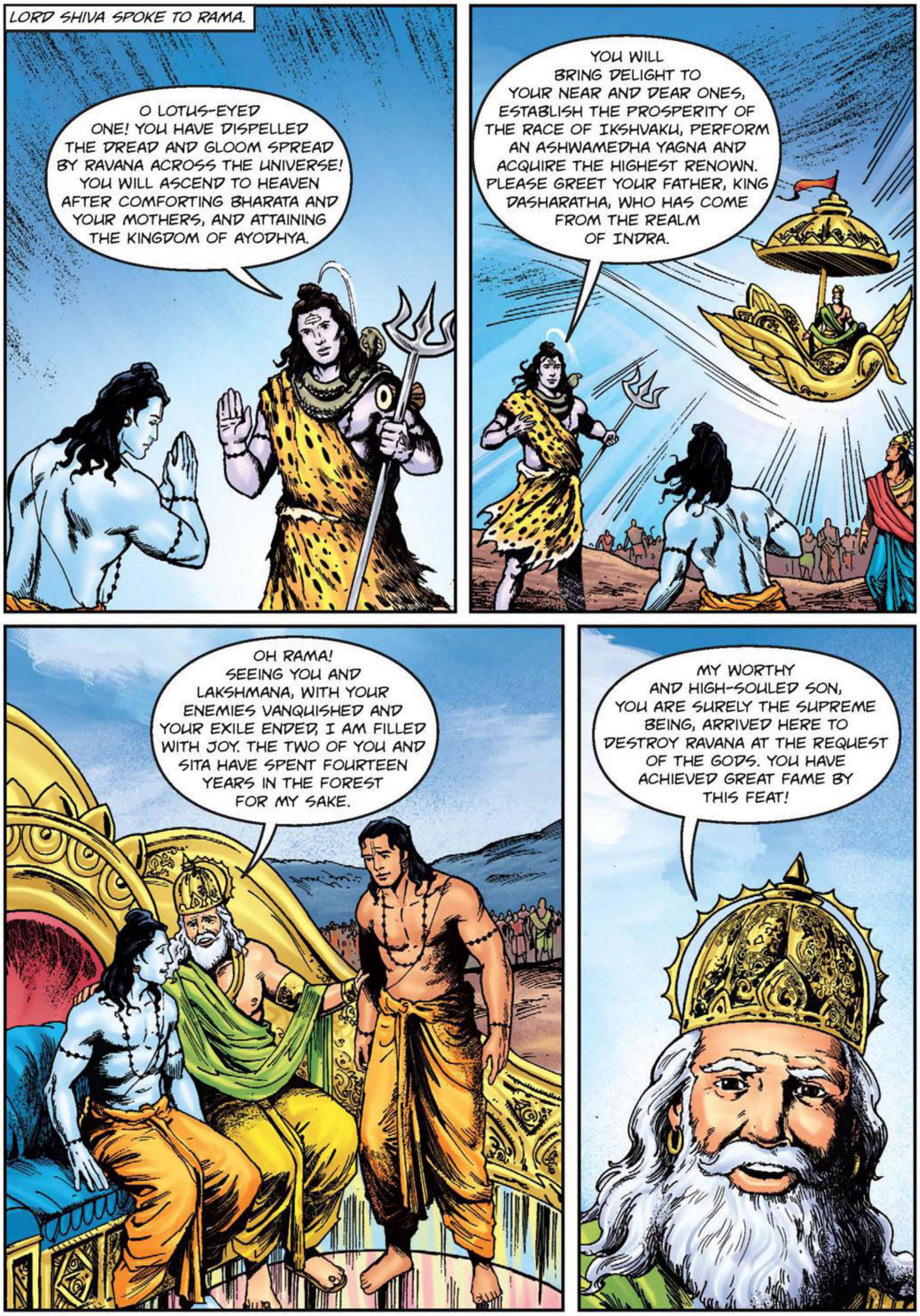
Rama (human prince) appeared in the Treta Yuga to kill Ravana, the tormentor of gods, rishis and all virtuous beings.

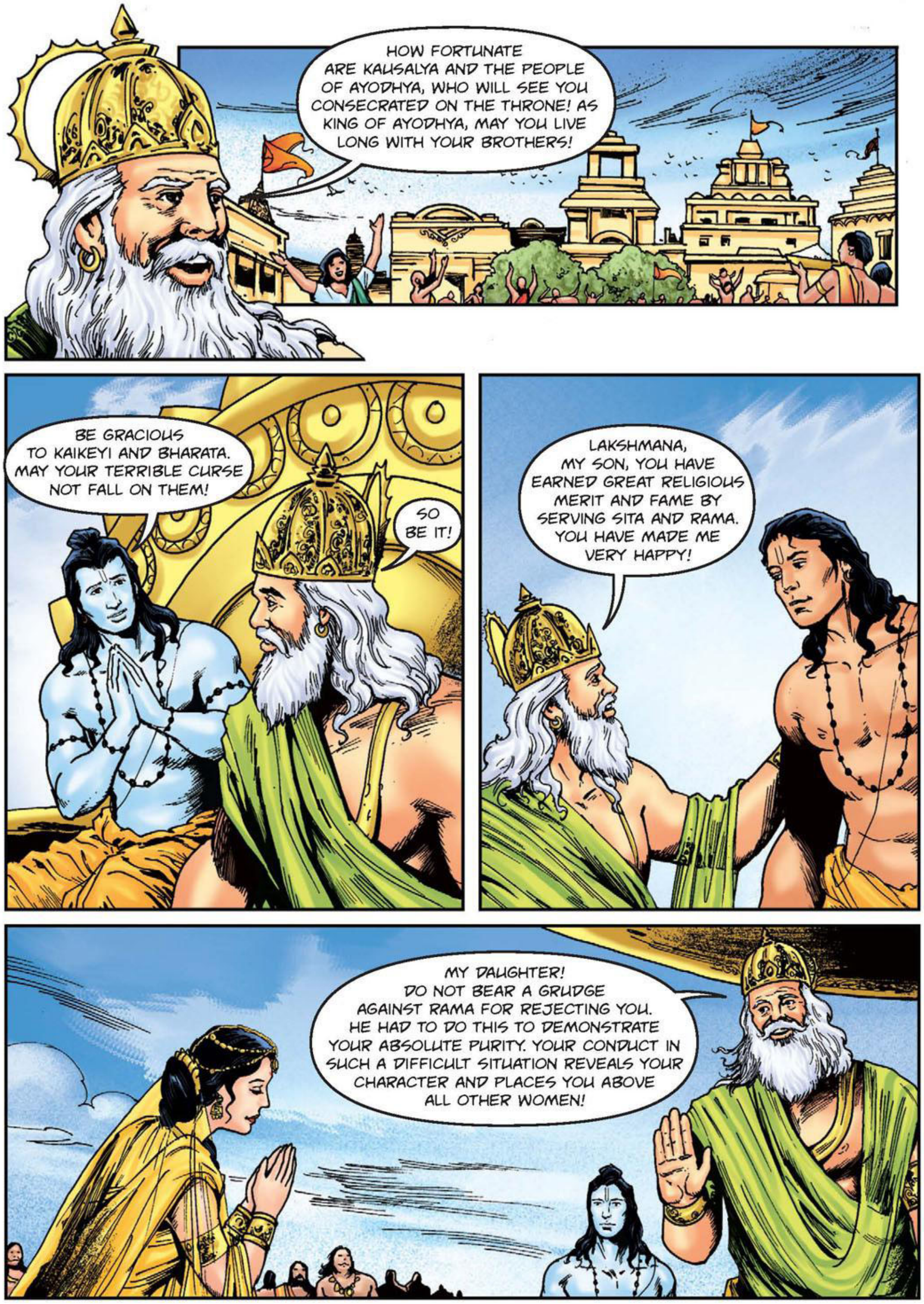
Krishna (human prince) appeared in the Dwapara Yuga to kill the wicked King Kamsa and establish dharma during the Mahabharata war.

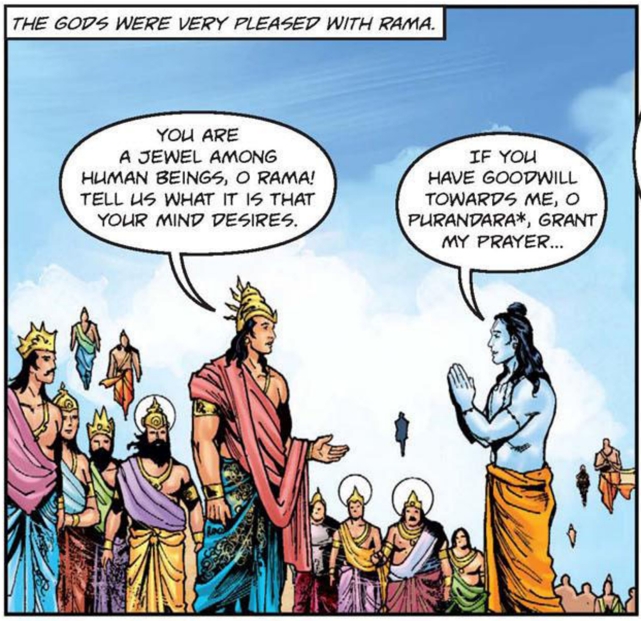
Buddha/ Balarama (Human prince) appeared in the Dwapara Yuga – both of these are regarded as Vishnu avataras.

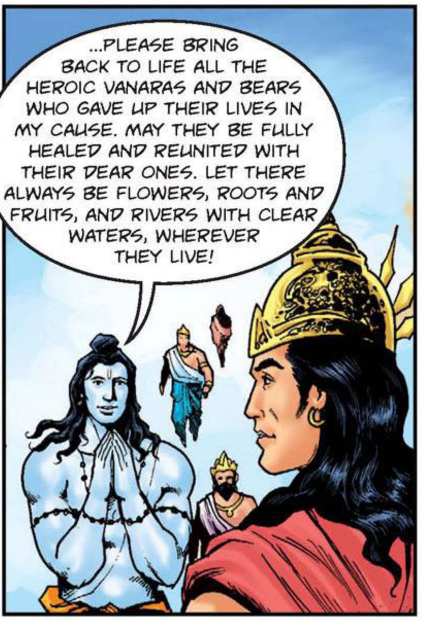
Kalki (the Superhuman) will appear in Kali Yuga on a winged white horse, carrying a flaming sword, to destroy darkness and ignorance. In the present cycle, we are in Kali Yuga, and Kalki is supposed to appear at the end of the cycle.

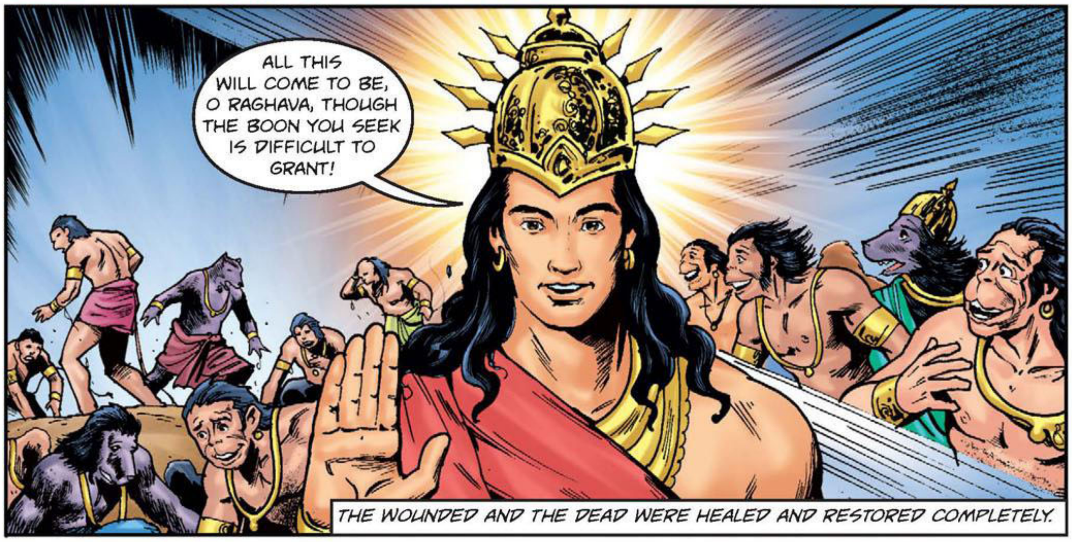

THEN PAAVAKAHA, THE WITNESS OF THE WORLD, ROSE FROM THE FIRE.
HERE IS SITA! SIN DOES NOT EXIST IN HER. THOUGH THREATENED AND TEMPTED BY THE CRUEL RAVANA, HER MIND WAS CLEAR AND FOCUSED, HER THOUGHTS CENTRED ON YOU.
SHE IS PURE AND BLAMELESS. NO HARSH WORD SHOULD BE SPOKEN TO HER.
SITA IS VERY DEAR TO ME, AND I TOO KNOW HER DEVOTION TO ME. RAVANA COULD NEVER VIOLATE HER, PROTECTED AS SHE WAS BY HER OWN MORAL POWER.
BUT SHE HAD TO UNDERGO THIS ORDEAL OF PURIFICATION IN THE EYES OF THE PEOPLE BECAUSE SHE LIVED FOR A LONG TIME IN RAVANA'S PALACE. THAT IS WHY I DID NOT STOP SITA WHEN SHE ENTERED THE FIRE. IN FACT, SITA IS INSEPARABLE FROM ME, AS SUNLIGHT IS INSEPARABLE FROM THE SUN.
I CANNOT REJECT SITA, WHO IS COMPLETELY PURE IN ALL THE WORLDS, ANY MORE THAN A GOOD MAN CAN RENOUNCE HIS GOOD NAME.

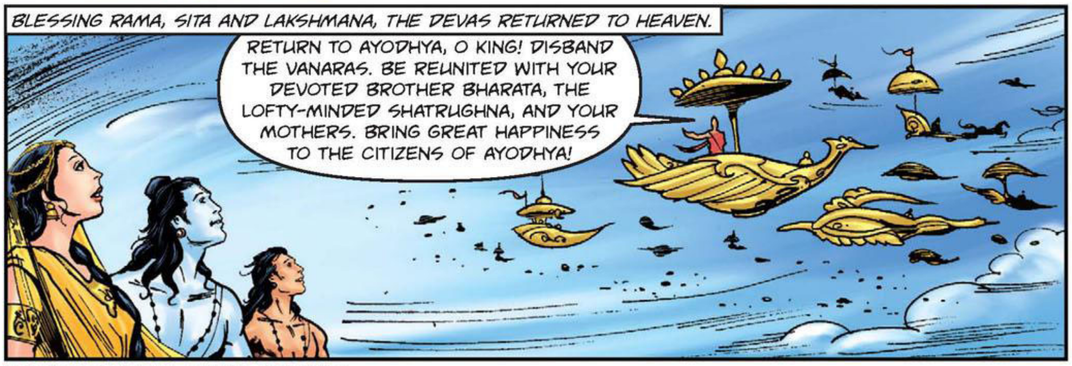

LORD SHIVA SPOKE TO RAMA.
O LOTUS-EYED ONE! YOU HAVE DISPELLED THE DREAD AND GLOOM SPREAD BY RAVANA ACROSS THE UNIVERSE! YOU WILL ASCEND TO HEAVEN AFTER COMFORTING BHARATA AND YOUR MOTHERS, AND ATTAINING THE KINGDOM OF AYODHYA.
YOU WILL BRING DELIGHT TO YOUR NEAR AND DEAR ONES, ESTABLISH THE PROSPERITY OF THE RACE OF IKSHVAKU, PERFORM AN ASHWAMEDHA YAGNA AND ACQUIRE THE HIGHEST RENOWN. PLEASE GREET YOUR FATHER, KING DASHARATHA, WHO HAS COME FROM THE REALM OF INDRA.
OH RAMA! SEEING YOU AND LAKSHMANA, WITH YOUR ENEMIES VANQUISHED AND YOUR EXILE ENDED, I AM FILLED WITH JOY. THE TWO OF YOU AND SITA HAVE SPENT FOURTEEN YEARS IN THE FOREST FOR MY SAKE.
MY WORTHY AND HIGH-SOULED SON, YOU ARE SURELY THE SUPREME BEING, ARRIVED HERE TO DESTROY RAVANA AT THE REQUEST OF THE GODS. YOU HAVE ACHIEVED GREAT FAME BY THIS FEAT!


HOW FORTUNATE ARE KAUSALYA AND THE PEOPLE OF AYODHYA, WHO WILL SEE YOU CONSECRATED ON THE THRONE! AS KING OF AYODHYA, MAY YOU LIVE LONG WITH YOUR BROTHERS!
BE GRACIOUS TO KAIKEYI AND BHARATA. MAY YOUR TERRIBLE CURSE NOT FALL ON THEM!
SO BE IT!
LAKSHMANA, MY SON, YOU HAVE EARNED GREAT RELIGIOUS MERIT AND FAME BY SERVING SITA AND RAMA. YOU HAVE MADE ME VERY HAPPY!
MY DAUGHTER! DO NOT BEAR A GRUDGE AGAINST RAMA FOR REJECTING YOU. HE HAD TO DO THIS TO DEMONSTRATE YOUR ABSOLUTE PURITY. YOUR CONDUCT IN SUCH A DIFFICULT SITUATION REVEALS YOUR CHARACTER AND PLACES YOU ABOVE ALL OTHER WOMEN!

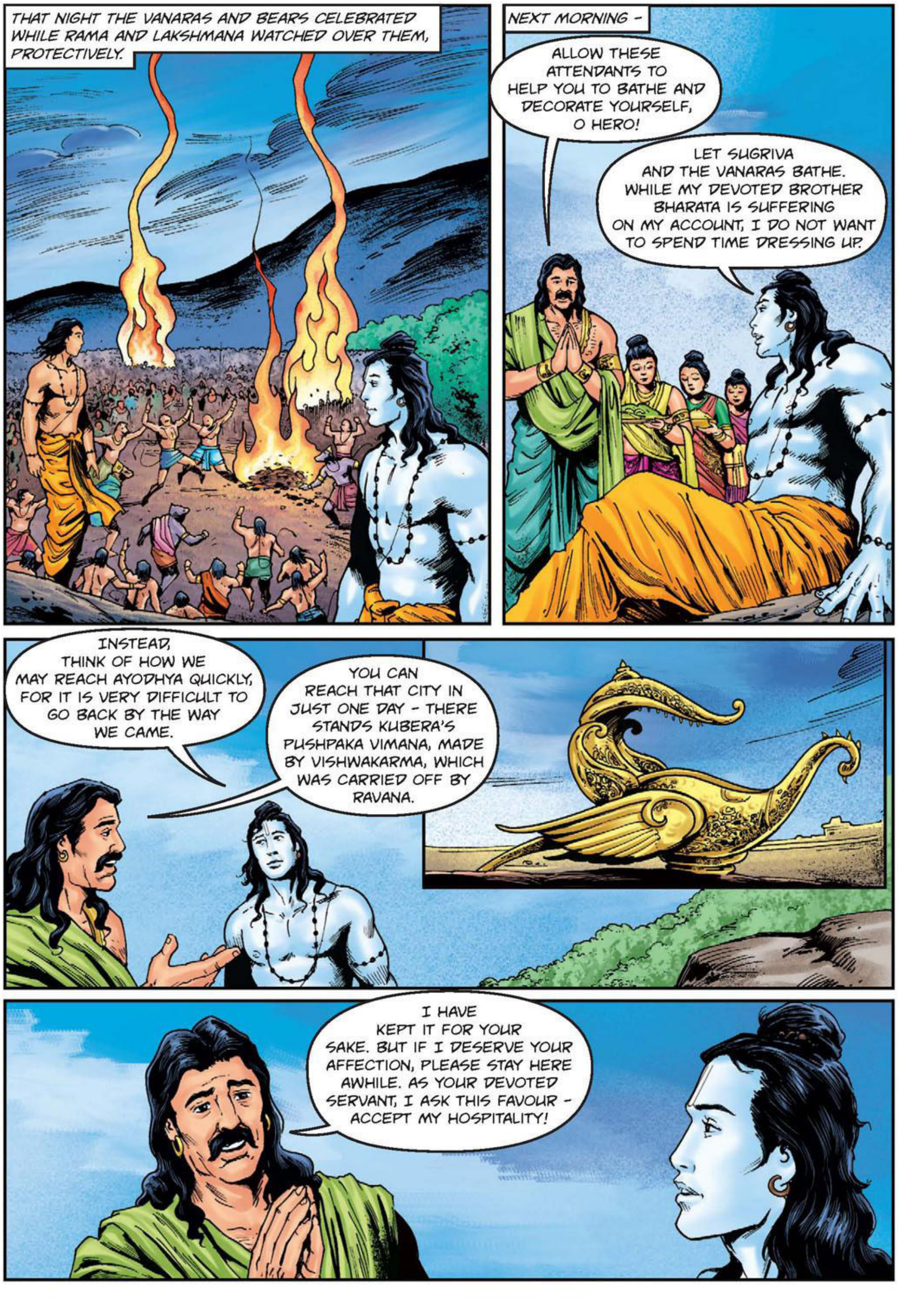

THE GODS WERE VERY PLEASED WITH RAMA.
YOU ARE A JEWEL AMONG HUMAN BEINGS, O RAMA! TELL US WHAT IT IS THAT YOUR MIND DESIRES.
IF YOU HAVE GOODWILL TOWARDS ME, O PURANDARA*, GRANT MY PRAYER...

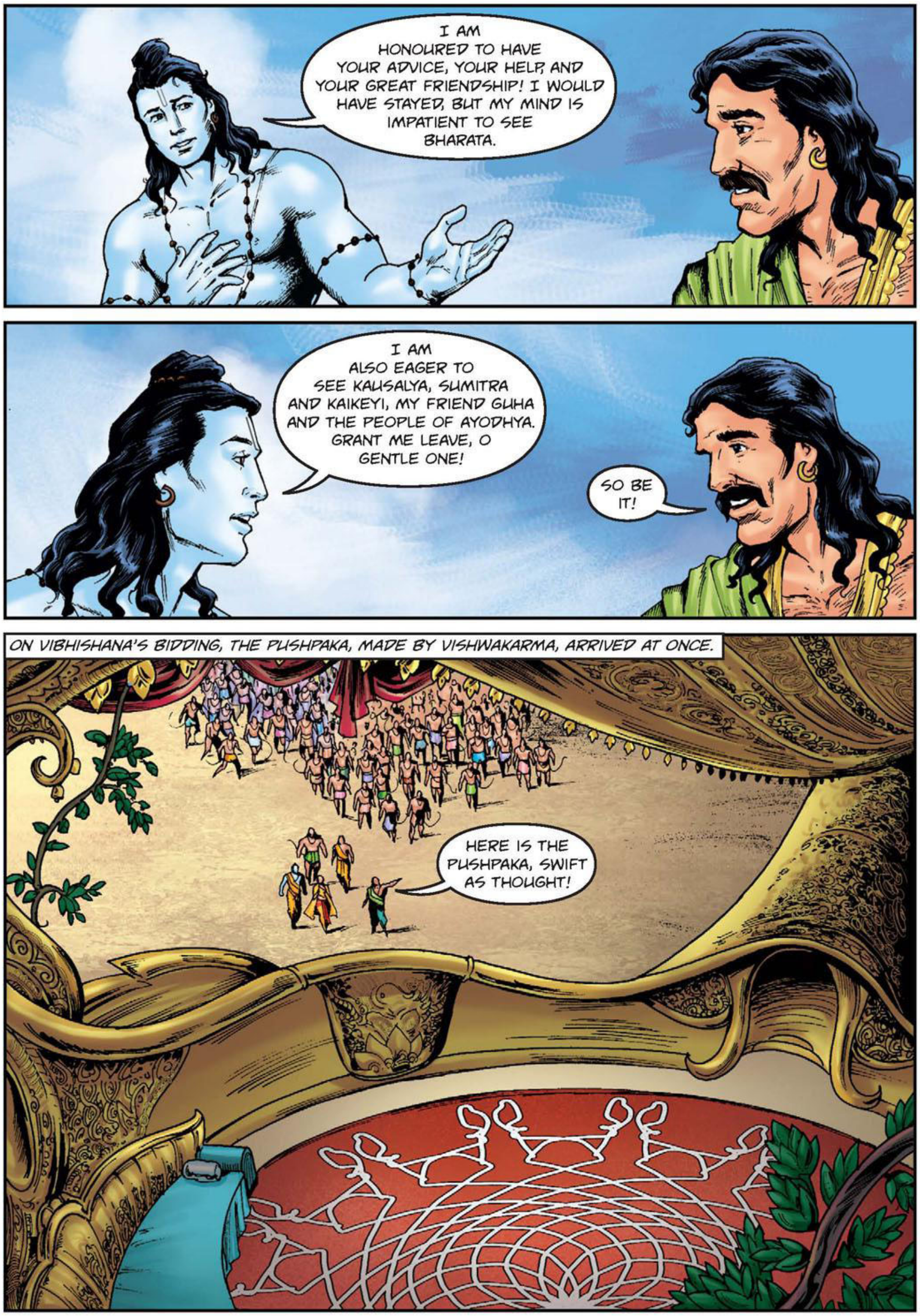

...PLEASE BRING BACK TO LIFE ALL THE HEROIC VANARAS AND BEARS WHO GAVE UP THEIR LIVES IN MY CAUSE. MAY THEY BE FULLY HEALED AND REUNITED WITH THEIR DEAR ONES. LET THERE ALWAYS BE FLOWERS, ROOTS AND FRUITS, AND RIVERS WITH CLEAR WATERS, WHEREVER THEY LIVE!

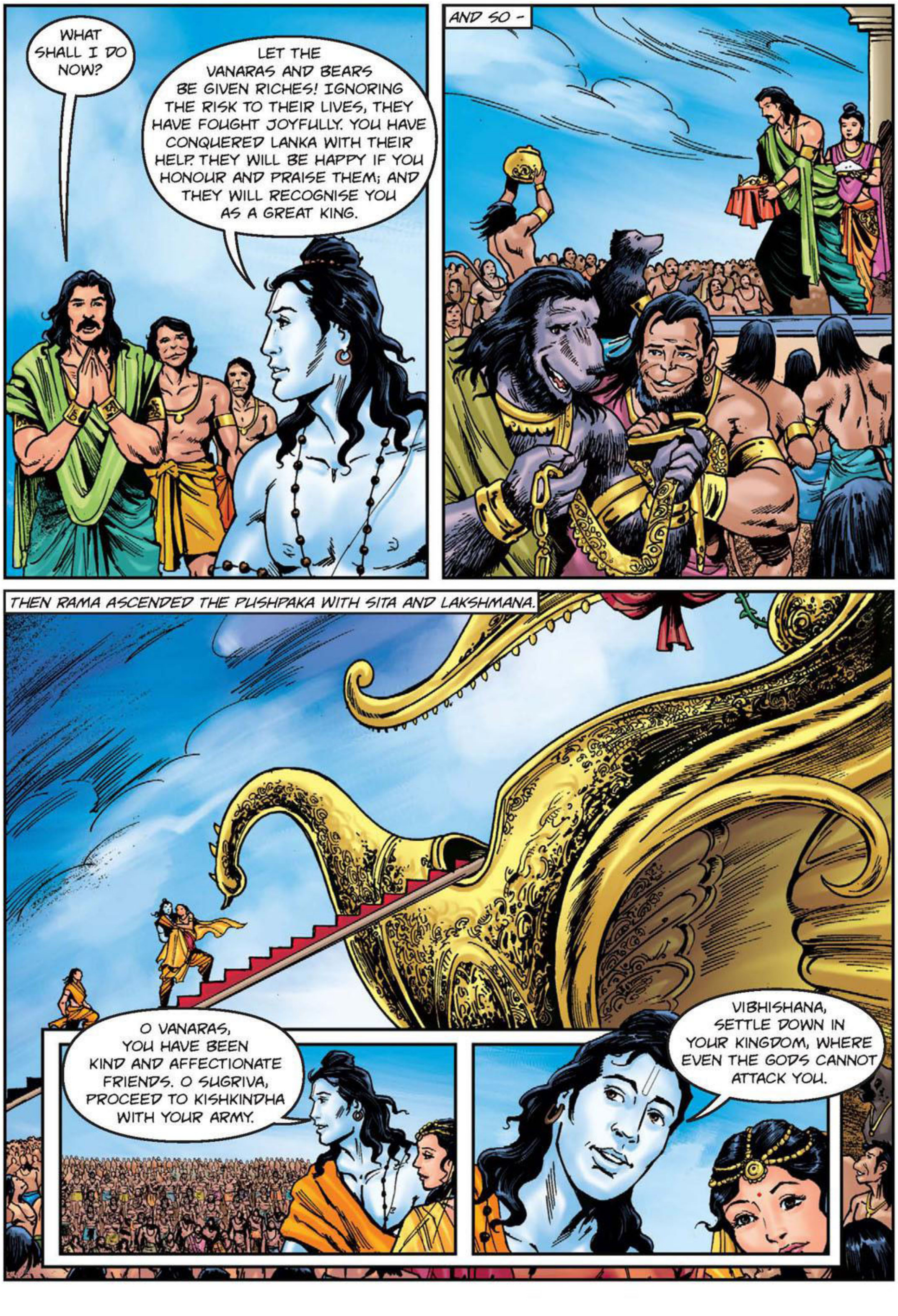

ALL THIS WILL COME TO BE, O RAGHAVA, THOUGH THE BOON YOU SEEK IS DIFFICULT TO GRANT!
THE WOUNDED AND THE DEAD WERE HEALED AND RESTORED COMPLETELY.

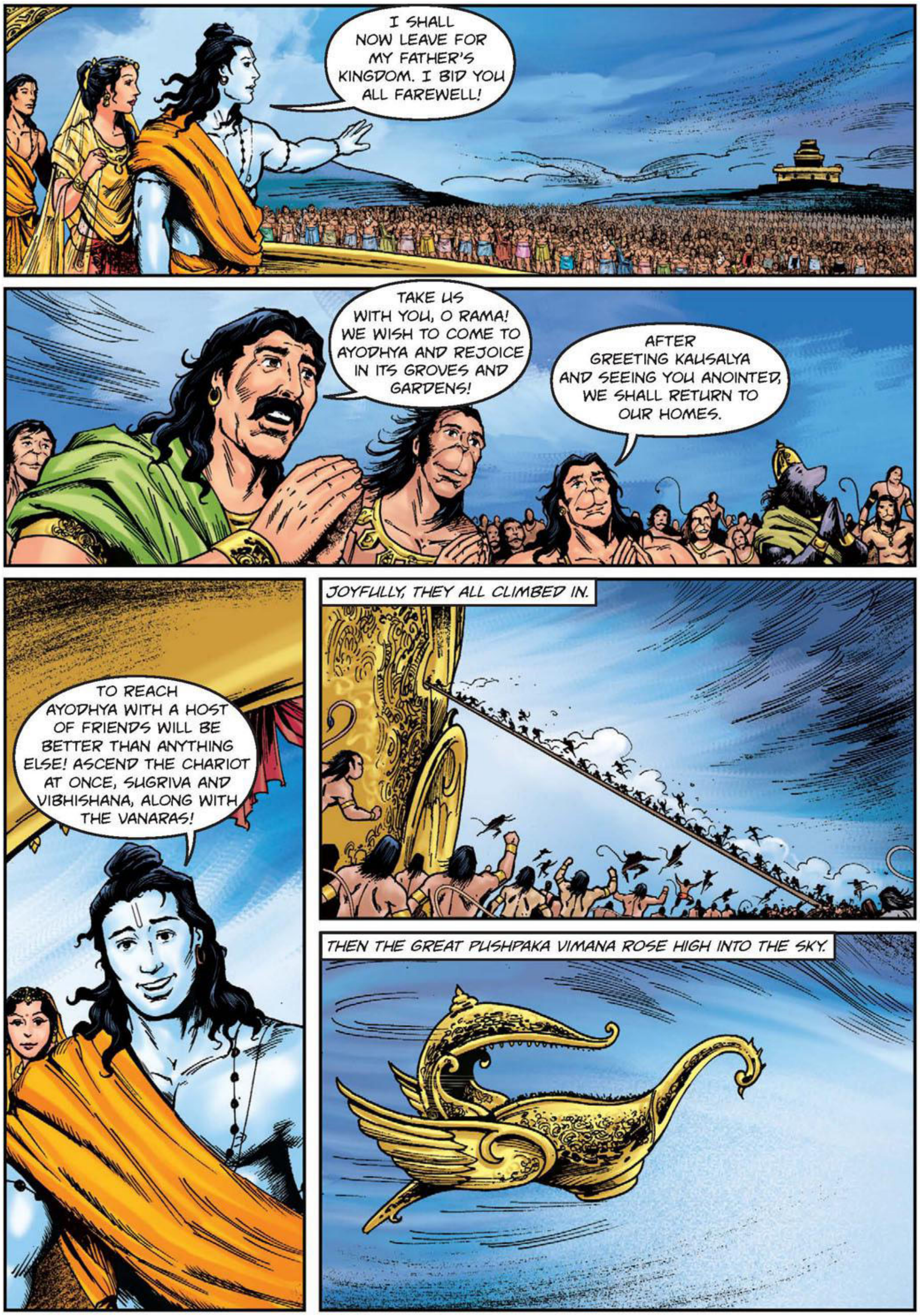

BLESSING RAMA, SITA AND LAKSHMANA, THE DEVAS RETURNED TO HEAVEN.
RETURN TO AYODHYA, O KING! DISBAND THE VANARAS. BE REUNITED WITH YOUR DEVOTED BROTHER BHARATA, THE LOFTY-MINDED SHATRUGHNA, AND YOUR MOTHERS. BRING GREAT HAPPINESS TO THE CITIZENS OF AYODHYA!

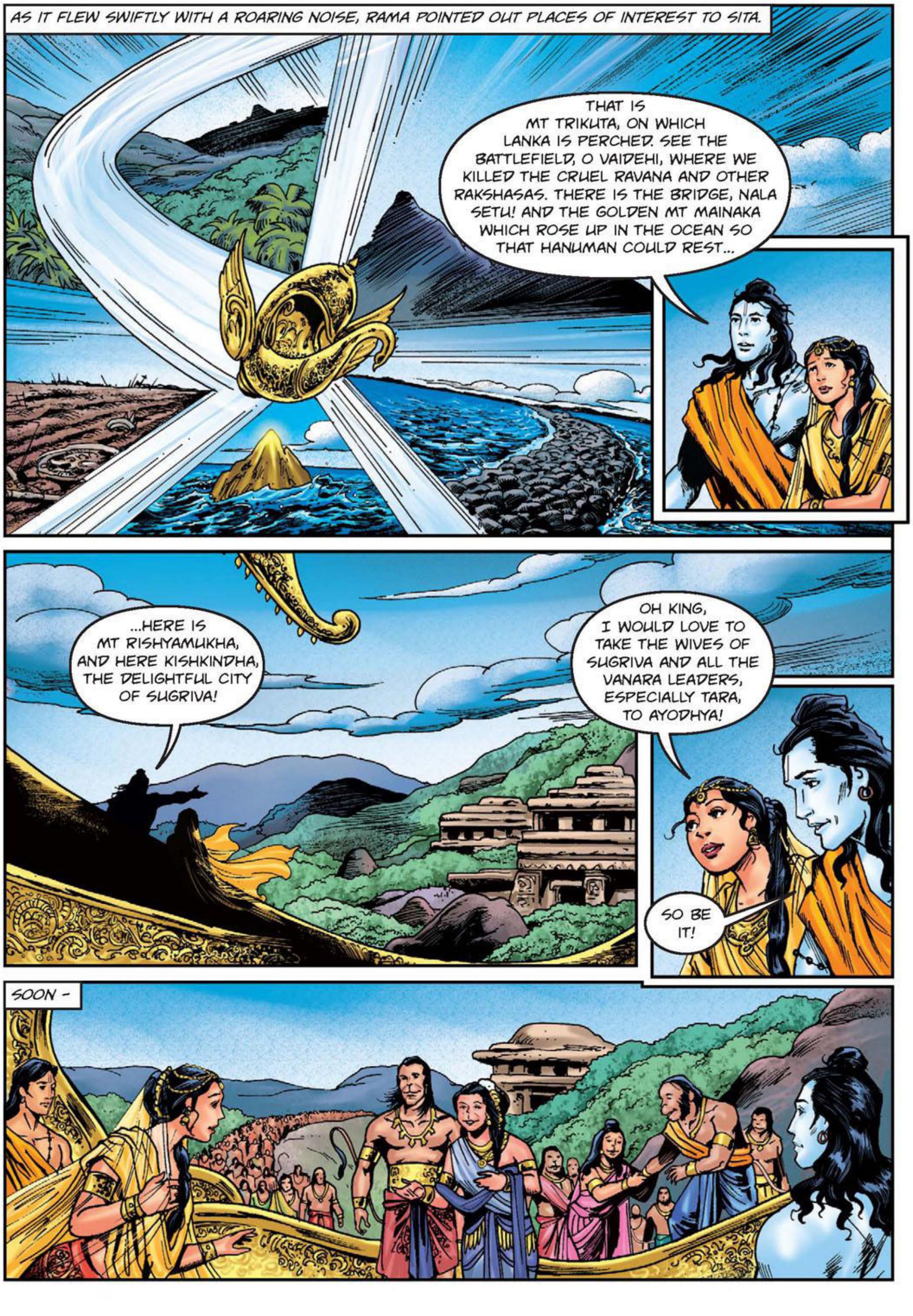
*ONE OF INDRA'S NAMES, MEANING 'DESTROYER OF CITADELS'

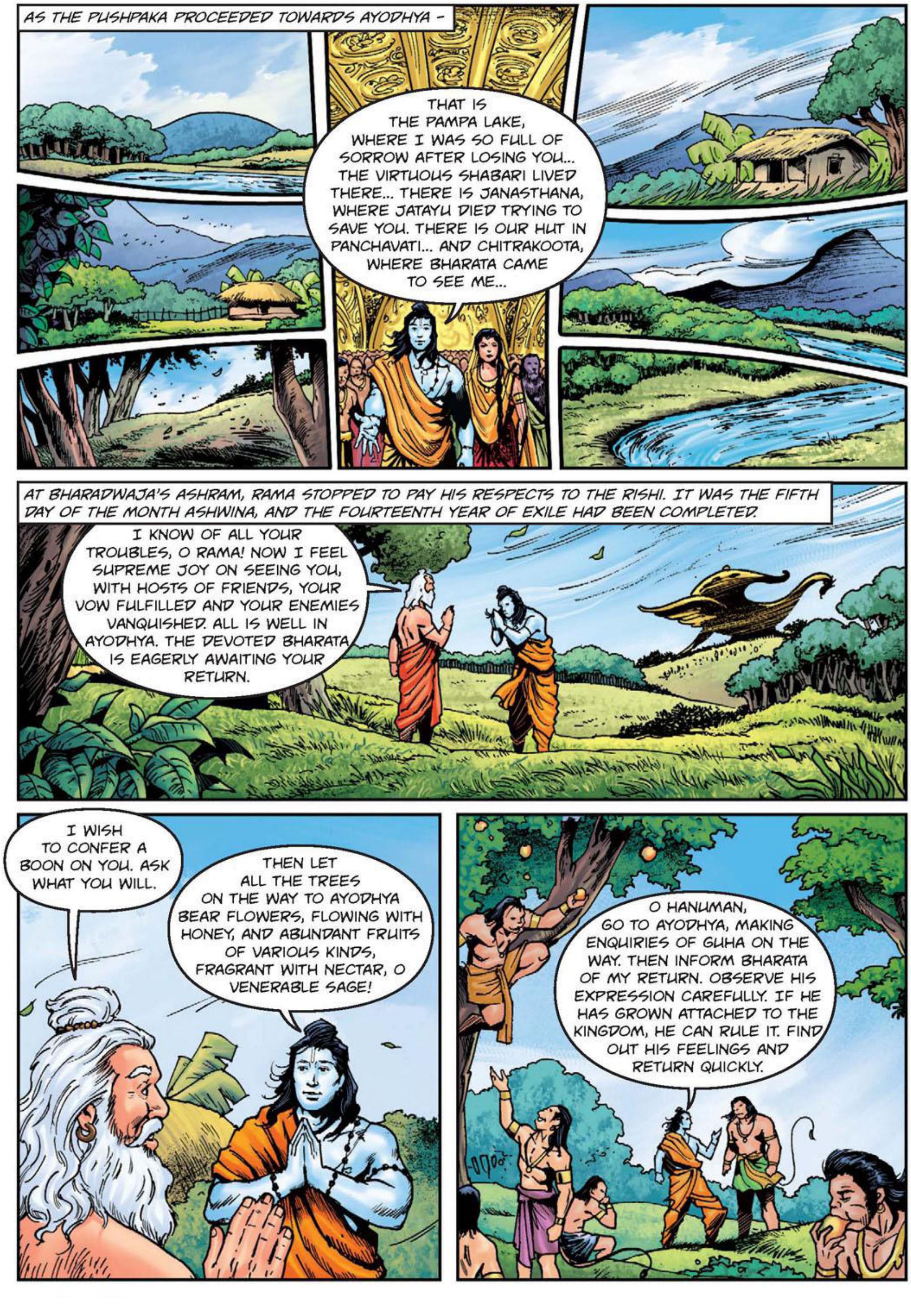

THAT NIGHT THE VANARAS AND BEARS CELEBRATED WHILE RAMA AND LAKSHMANA WATCHED OVER THEM, PROTECTIVELY.
NEXT MORNING -
ALLOW THESE ATTENDANTS TO HELP YOU TO BATHE AND DECORATE YOURSELF, O HERO!
LET SUGRIVA AND THE VANARAS BATHE. WHILE MY DEVOTED BROTHER BHARATA IS SUFFERING ON MY ACCOUNT, I DO NOT WANT TO SPEND TIME DRESSING UP.
INSTEAD, THINK OF HOW WE MAY REACH AYODHYA QUICKLY, FOR IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO GO BACK BY THE WAY WE CAME.
YOU CAN REACH THAT CITY IN JUST ONE DAY - THERE STANDS KUBERA'S PUSHPAKA VIMANA, MADE BY VISHWAKARMA, WHICH WAS CARRIED OFF BY RAVANA.
I HAVE KEPT IT FOR YOUR SAKE. BUT IF I DESERVE YOUR AFFECTION, PLEASE STAY HERE AWHILE. AS YOUR DEVOTED SERVANT, I ASK THIS FAVOUR - ACCEPT MY HOSPITALITY!

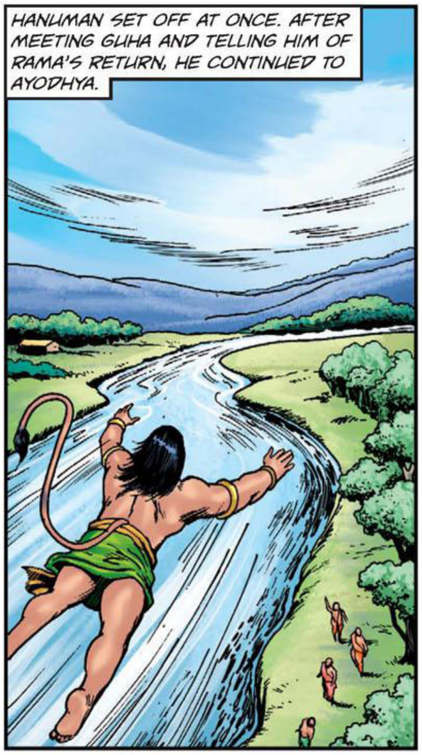

I AM HONOURED TO HAVE YOUR ADVICE, YOUR HELP, AND YOUR GREAT FRIENDSHIP! I WOULD HAVE STAYED, BUT MY MIND IS IMPATIENT TO SEE BHARATA.
I AM ALSO EAGER TO SEE KAUSALYA, SUMITRA AND KAIKEYI, MY FRIEND GUHA AND THE PEOPLE OF AYODHYA. GRANT ME LEAVE, O GENTLE ONE!
SO BE IT!
ON VIBHISHANA'S BIDDING, THE PUSHPAKA, MADE BY VISHWAKARMA, ARRIVED AT ONCE.
HERE IS THE PUSHPAKA, SWIFT AS THOUGHT!

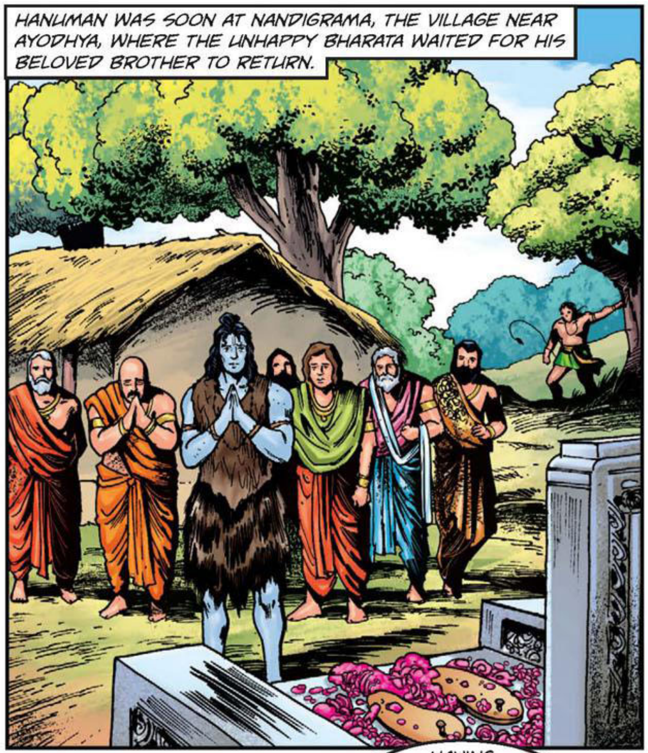

WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?
LET THE VANARAS AND BEARS BE GIVEN RICHES! IGNORING THE RISK TO THEIR LIVES, THEY HAVE FOUGHT JOYFULLY. YOU HAVE CONQUERED LANKA WITH THEIR HELP. THEY WILL BE HAPPY IF YOU HONOUR AND PRAISE THEM; AND THEY WILL RECOGNISE YOU AS A GREAT KING.
AND SO –
THEN RAMA ASCENDED THE PUSHPAKA WITH SITA AND LAKSHMANA.
O VANARAS, YOU HAVE BEEN KIND AND AFFECTIONATE FRIENDS. O SUGRIVA, PROCEED TO KISHKINDHA WITH YOUR ARMY.
VIBHISHANA, SETTLE DOWN IN YOUR KINGDOM, WHERE EVEN THE GODS CANNOT ATTACK YOU.

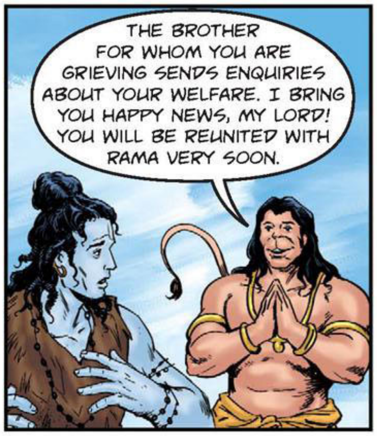

I SHALL NOW LEAVE FOR MY FATHER'S KINGDOM. I BID YOU ALL FAREWELL!
TAKE US WITH YOU, O RAMA! WE WISH TO COME TO AYODHYA AND REJOICE IN ITS GROVES AND GARDENS!
AFTER GREETING KAUSALYA AND SEEING YOU ANOINTED, WE SHALL RETURN TO OUR HOMES.
TO REACH AYODHYA WITH A HOST OF FRIENDS WILL BE BETTER THAN ANYTHING ELSE! ASCEND THE CHARIOT AT ONCE, SUGRIVA AND VIBHISHANA, ALONG WITH THE VANARAS!
JOYFULLY, THEY ALL CLIMBED IN.
THEN THE GREAT PUSHPAKA VIMANA ROSE HIGH INTO THE SKY.

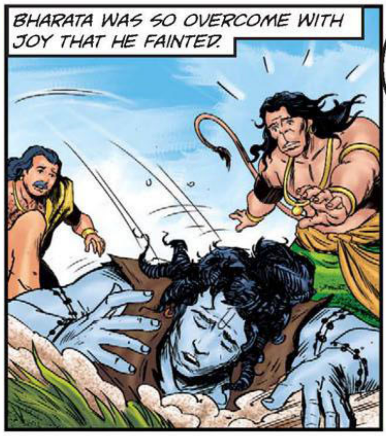

AS IT FLEW SWIFTLY WITH A ROARING NOISE, RAMA POINTED OUT PLACES OF INTEREST TO SITA.
THAT IS MT TRIKUTA, ON WHICH LANKA IS PERCHED. SEE THE BATTLEFIELD, O VAIDEHI, WHERE WE KILLED THE CRUEL RAVANA AND OTHER RAKSHASAS. THERE IS THE BRIDGE, NALA SETU! AND THE GOLDEN MT MAINAKA WHICH ROSE UP IN THE OCEAN SO THAT HANUMAN COULD REST...
...HERE IS MT RISHYAMUKHA, AND HERE KISHKINDHA, THE DELIGHTFUL CITY OF SUGRIVA!
OH KING, I WOULD LOVE TO TAKE THE WIVES OF SUGRIVA AND ALL THE VANARA LEADERS, ESPECIALLY TARA, TO AYODHYA!
SO BE IT!
SOON -

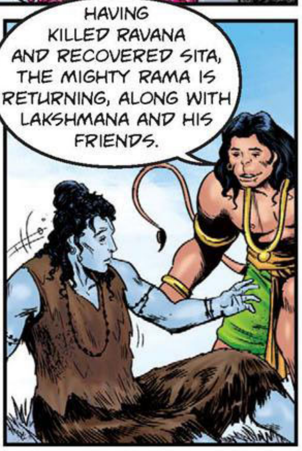

AS THE PUSHPAKA PROCEEDED TOWARDS AYODHYA –
THAT IS THE PAMPA LAKE, WHERE I WAS SO FULL OF SORROW AFTER LOSING YOU... THE VIRTUOUS SHABARI LIVED THERE... THERE IS JANASTHANA, WHERE JATAYU DIED TRYING TO SAVE YOU. THERE IS OUR HUT IN PANCHAVATI... AND CHITRAKOOTA, WHERE BHARATA CAME TO SEE ME...
AT BHARADWAJA'S ASHRAM, RAMA STOPPED TO PAY HIS RESPECTS TO THE RISHI. IT WAS THE FIFTH DAY OF THE MONTH ASHWINA, AND THE FOURTEENTH YEAR OF EXILE HAD BEEN COMPLETED.
I KNOW OF ALL YOUR TROUBLES, O RAMA! NOW I FEEL SUPREME JOY ON SEEING YOU, WITH HOSTS OF FRIENDS, YOUR VOW FULFILLED AND YOUR ENEMIES VANQUISHED. ALL IS WELL IN AYODHYA. THE DEVOTED BHARATA IS EAGERLY AWAITING YOUR RETURN.
I WISH TO CONFER A BOON ON YOU. ASK WHAT YOU WILL.
THEN LET ALL THE TREES ON THE WAY TO AYODHYA BEAR FLOWERS, FLOWING WITH HONEY, AND ABUNDANT FRUITS OF VARIOUS KINDS, FRAGRANT WITH NECTAR, O VENERABLE SAGE!
O HANUMAN, GO TO AYODHYA, MAKING ENQUIRIES OF GUHA ON THE WAY. THEN INFORM BHARATA OF MY RETURN. OBSERVE HIS EXPRESSION CAREFULLY. IF HE HAS GROWN ATTACHED TO THE KINGDOM, HE CAN RULE IT. FIND OUT HIS FEELINGS AND RETURN QUICKLY.

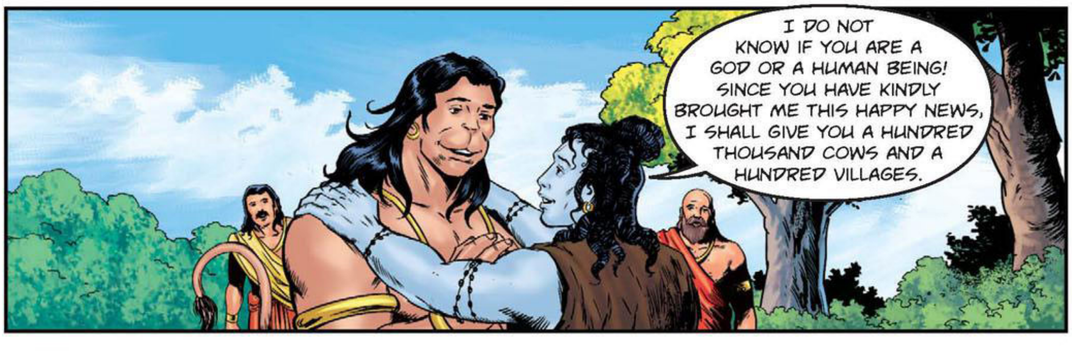

HANUMAN SET OFF AT ONCE. AFTER MEETING GUHA AND TELLING HIM OF RAMA'S RETURN, HE CONTINUED TO AYODHYA.

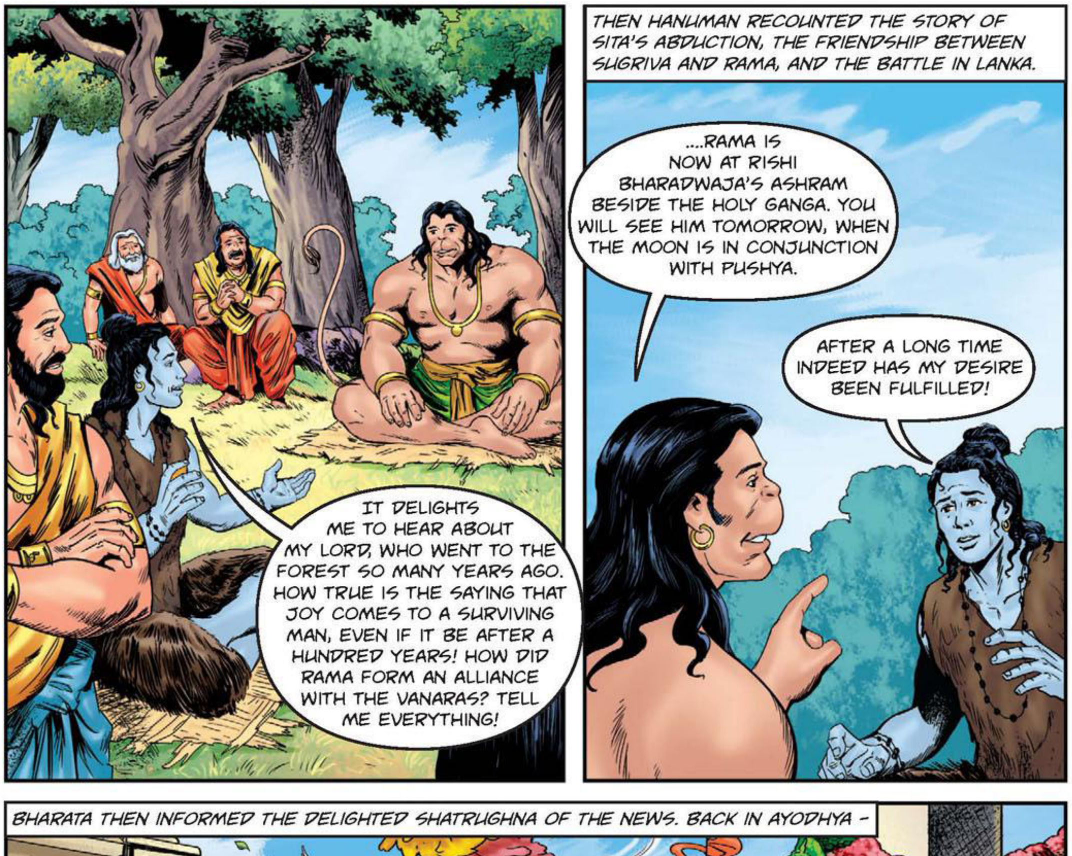

HANUMAN WAS SOON AT NANDIGRAMA, THE VILLAGE NEAR AYODHYA, WHERE THE UNHAPPY BHARATA WAITED FOR HIS BELOVED BROTHER TO RETURN.

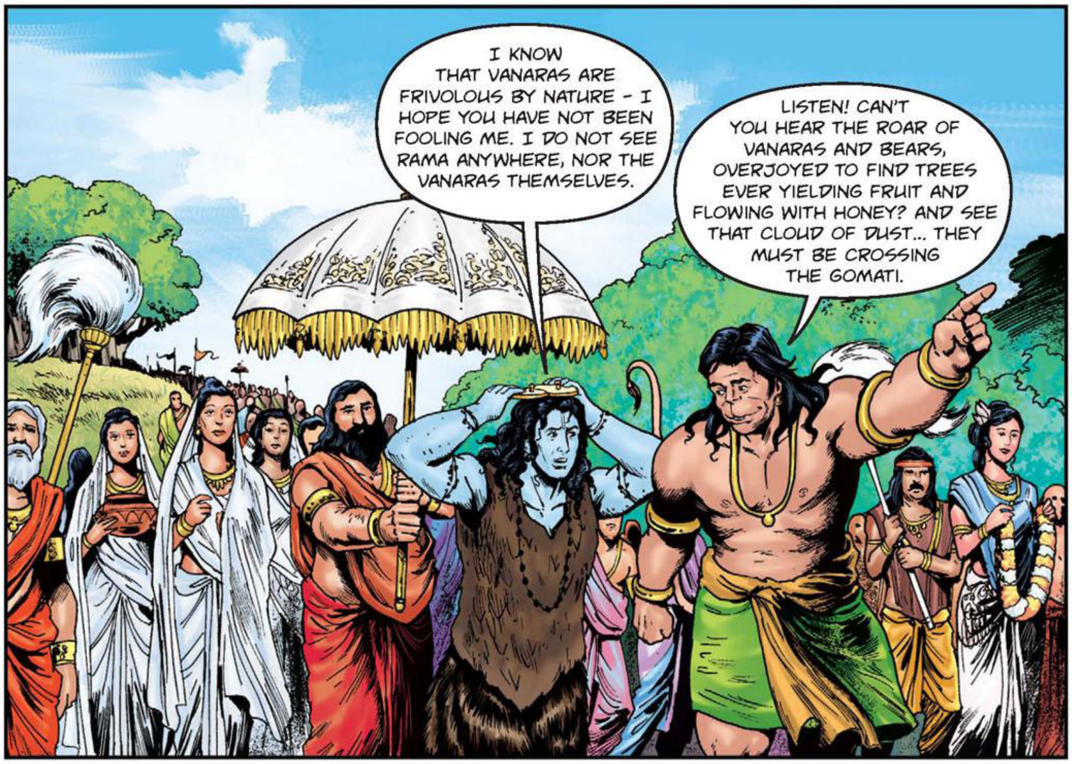

THE BROTHER FOR WHOM YOU ARE GRIEVING SENDS ENQUIRIES ABOUT YOUR WELFARE. I BRING YOU HAPPY NEWS, MY LORD! YOU WILL BE REUNITED WITH RAMA VERY SOON.

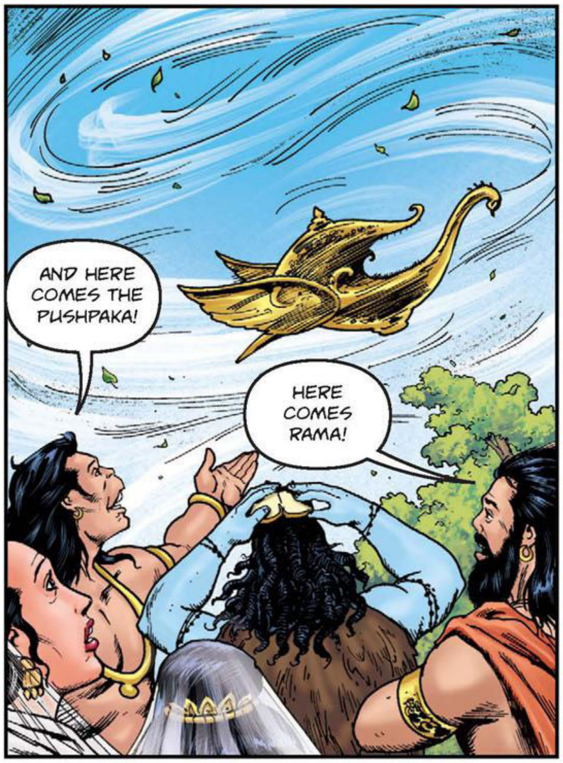

BHARATA WAS SO OVERCOME WITH JOY THAT HE FAINTED.

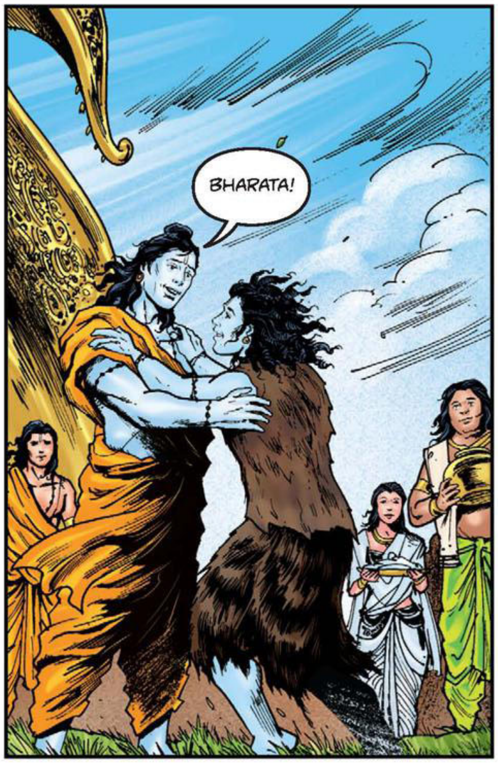

HAVING KILLED RAVANA AND RECOVERED SITA, THE MIGHTY RAMA IS RETURNING, ALONG WITH LAKSHMANA AND HIS FRIENDS.

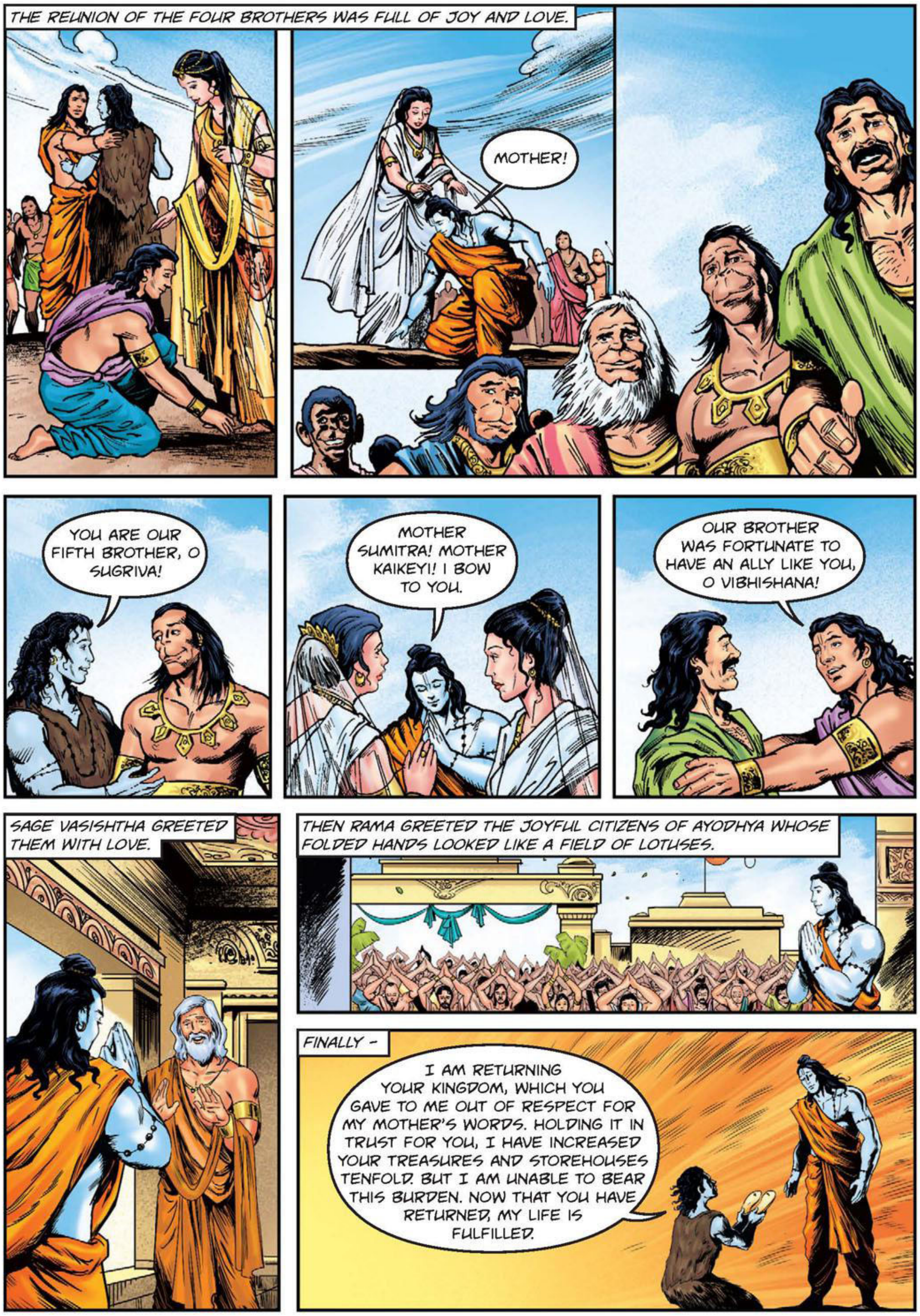

I DO NOT KNOW IF YOU ARE A GOD OR A HUMAN BEING! SINCE YOU HAVE KINDLY BROUGHT ME THIS HAPPY NEWS, I SHALL GIVE YOU A HUNDRED THOUSAND COWS AND A HUNDRED VILLAGES.

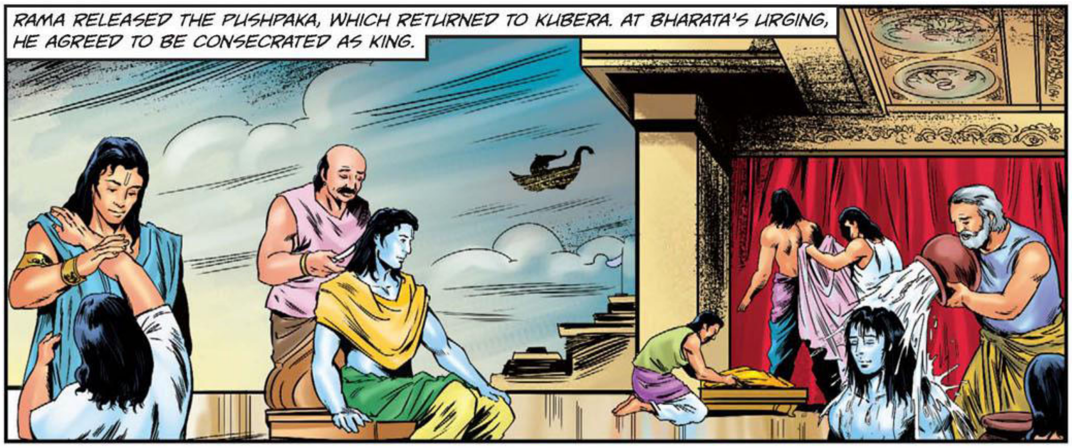

IT DELIGHTS ME TO HEAR ABOUT MY LORD, WHO WENT TO THE FOREST SO MANY YEARS AGO. HOW TRUE IS THE SAYING THAT JOY COMES TO A SURVIVING MAN, EVEN IF IT BE AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS! HOW DID RAMA FORM AN ALLIANCE WITH THE VANARAS? TELL ME EVERYTHING!
THEN HANUMAN RECOUNTED THE STORY OF SITA'S ABDUCTION, THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN SUGRIVA AND RAMA, AND THE BATTLE IN LANKA.
...RAMA IS NOW AT RISHI BHARADWAJA'S ASHRAM BESIDE THE HOLY GANGA. YOU WILL SEE HIM TOMORROW, WHEN THE MOON IS IN CONJUNCTION WITH PUSHYA.
AFTER A LONG TIME INDEED HAS MY DESIRE BEEN FULFILLED!
BHARATA THEN INFORMED THE DELIGHTED SHATRUGHNA OF THE NEWS. BACK IN AYODHYA –
RAMA IS COMING! RAMA IS COMING!
LET US GO TO MEET HIM!

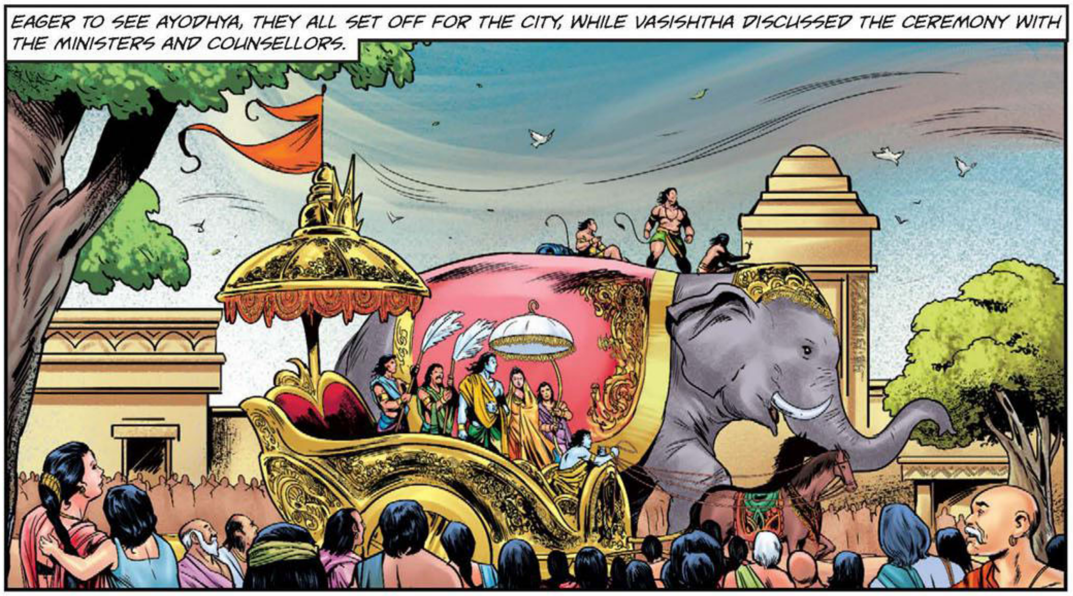

I KNOW THAT VANARAS ARE FRIVOLOUS BY NATURE - I HOPE YOU HAVE NOT BEEN FOOLING ME. I DO NOT SEE RAMA ANYWHERE, NOR THE VANARAS THEMSELVES.
LISTEN! CAN'T YOU HEAR THE ROAR OF VANARAS AND BEARS, OVERJOYED TO FIND TREES EVER YIELDING FRUIT AND FLOWING WITH HONEY? AND SEE THAT CLOUD OF DUST... THEY MUST BE CROSSING THE GOMATI.

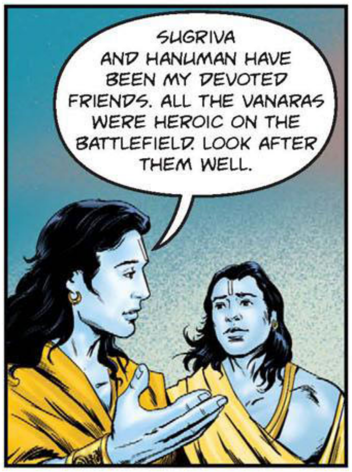

AND HERE COMES THE PUSHPAKA!
HERE COMES RAMA!

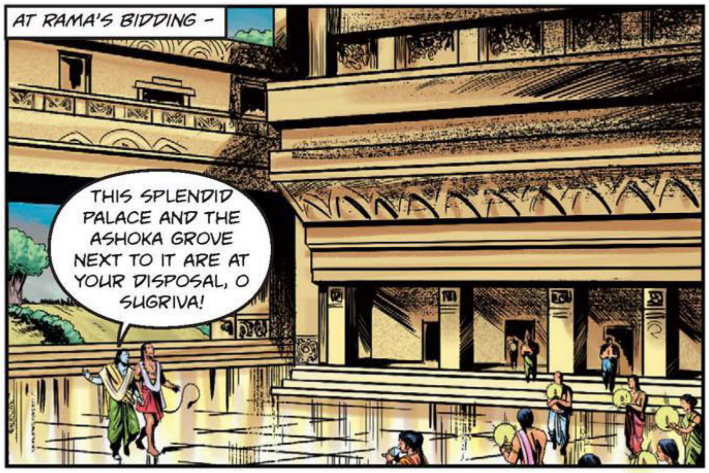

BHARATA!


THE REUNION OF THE FOUR BROTHERS WAS FULL OF JOY AND LOVE.
MOTHER!
YOU ARE OUR FIFTH BROTHER, O SUGRIVA!
MOTHER SUMITRA! MOTHER KAIKEYI! I BOW TO YOU.
OUR BROTHER WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE AN ALLY LIKE YOU, O VIBHISHANA!
SAGE VASISHTHA GREETED THEM WITH LOVE.
THEN RAMA GREETED THE JOYFUL CITIZENS OF AYODHYA WHOSE FOLDED HANDS LOOKED LIKE A FIELD OF LOTUSES.
FINALLY –
I AM RETURNING YOUR KINGDOM, WHICH YOU GAVE TO ME OUT OF RESPECT FOR MY MOTHER'S WORDS. HOLDING IT IN TRUST FOR YOU, I HAVE INCREASED YOUR TREASURES AND STOREHOUSES TENFOLD. BUT I AM UNABLE TO BEAR THIS BURDEN. NOW THAT YOU HAVE RETURNED, MY LIFE IS FULFILLED.

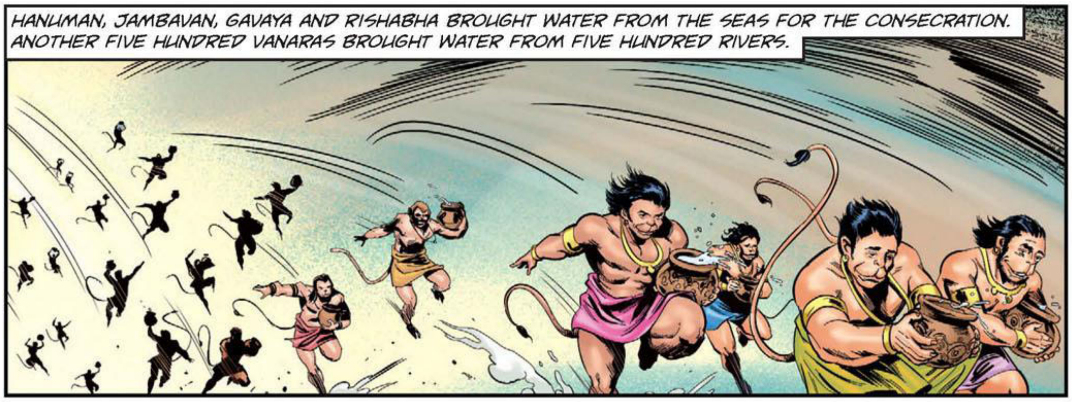

RAMA RELEASED THE PUSHPAKA, WHICH RETURNED TO KUBERA. AT BHARATA'S URGING, HE AGREED TO BE CONSECRATED AS KING.


EAGER TO SEE AYODHYA, THEY ALL SET OFF FOR THE CITY, WHILE VASISHTHA DISCUSSED THE CEREMONY WITH THE MINISTERS AND COUNSELLORS.

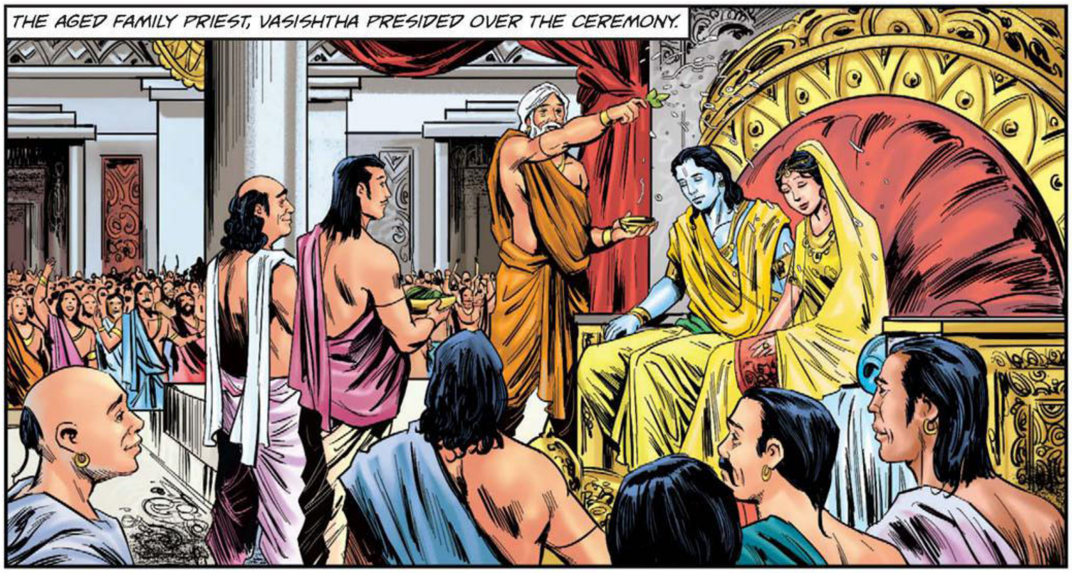

SUGRIVA AND HANUMAN HAVE BEEN MY DEVOTED FRIENDS. ALL THE VANARAS WERE HEROIC ON THE BATTLEFIELD. LOOK AFTER THEM WELL.

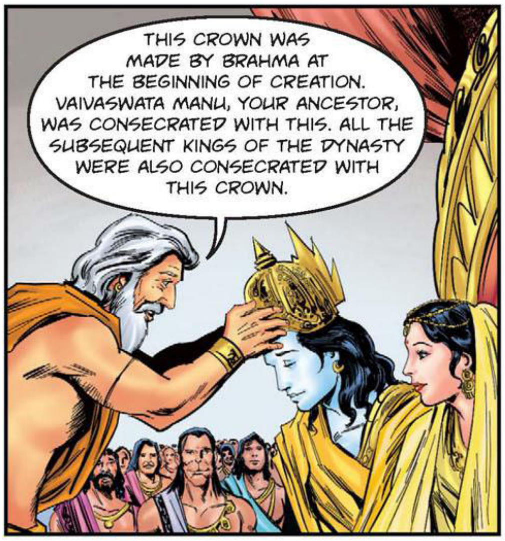

AT RAMA'S BIDDING –
THIS SPLENDID PALACE AND THE ASHOKA GROVE NEXT TO IT ARE AT YOUR DISPOSAL, O SUGRIVA!

HANUMAN, JAMBAVAN, GAVAYA AND RISHABHA BROUGHT WATER FROM THE SEAS FOR THE CONSECRATION. ANOTHER FIVE HUNDRED VANARAS BROUGHT WATER FROM FIVE HUNDRED RIVERS.

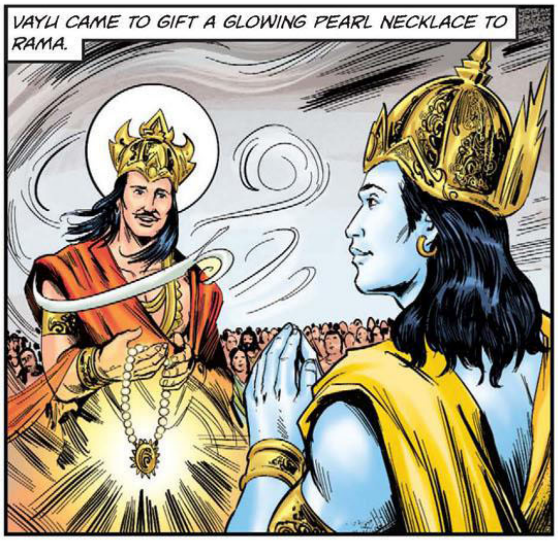


THE AGED FAMILY PRIEST, VASISHTHA PRESIDED OVER THE CEREMONY.

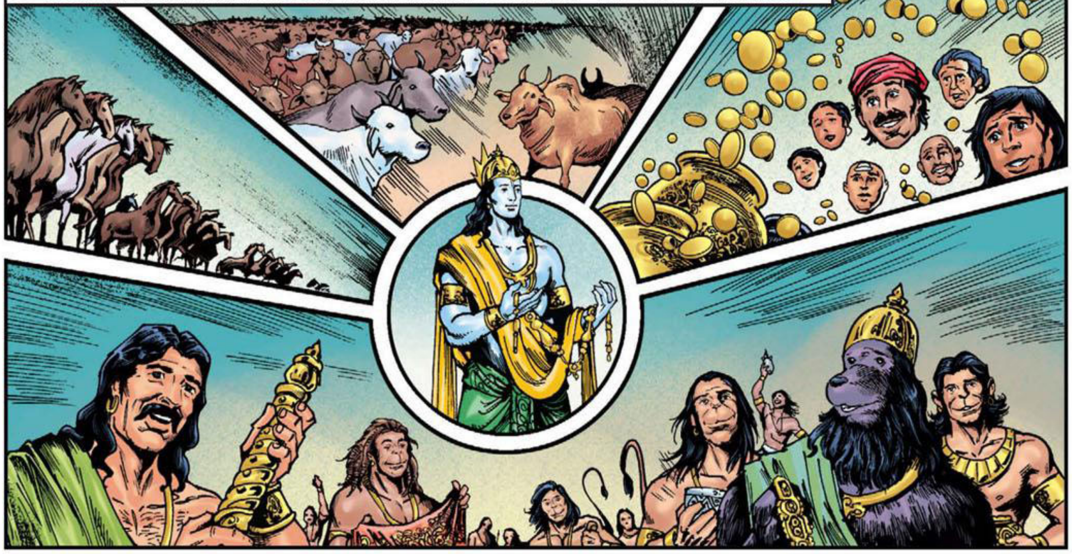



THIS CROWN WAS MADE BY BRAHMA AT THE BEGINNING OF CREATION. VAIVASWATA MANU, YOUR ANCESTOR, WAS CONSECRATED WITH THIS. ALL THE SUBSEQUENT KINGS OF THE DYNASTY WERE ALSO CONSECRATED WITH THIS CROWN.

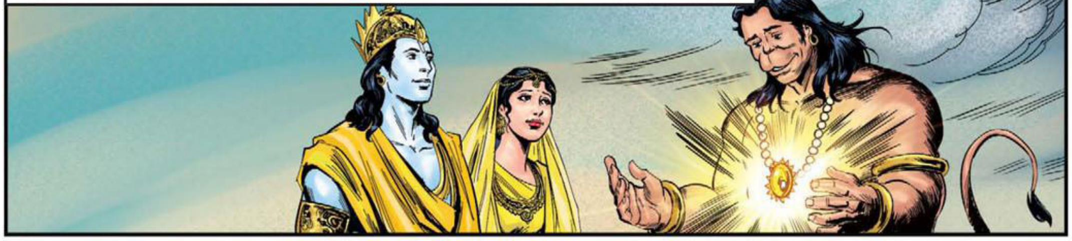
VAYU CAME TO GIFT A GLOWING PEARL NECKLACE TO RAMA.



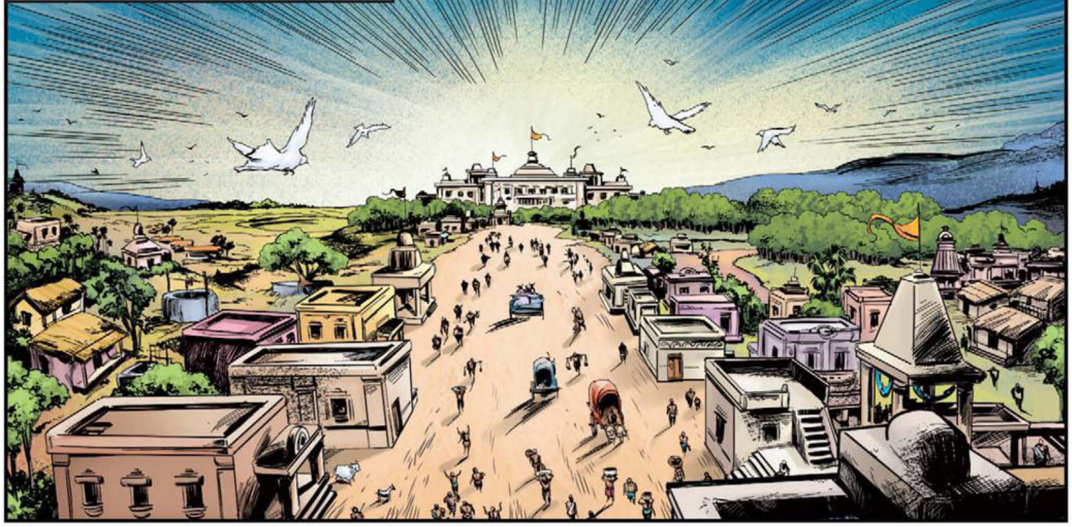
AFTER THE CEREMONY, RAMA GAVE AWAY ONE LAKH HORSES AND NEWLY-CALVED COWS, A HUNDRED BULLS, THIRTY CRORE GOLD COINS, AND ALL KINDS OF COSTLY JEWELS AND CLOTHES. HE GAVE RICH GIFTS TO SUGRIVA, VIBHISHANA, ANGADA, HANUMAN, JAMBAVAN AND THE OTHER VANARAS.



RAMA HAD GIVEN VAYU'S PEARL NECKLACE TO SITA. EAGER TO GIVE HANUMAN A GIFT, SHE GOT RAMA'S PERMISSION TO PRESENT IT TO THAT VALIANT AND INTELLIGENT SON OF VAYU.



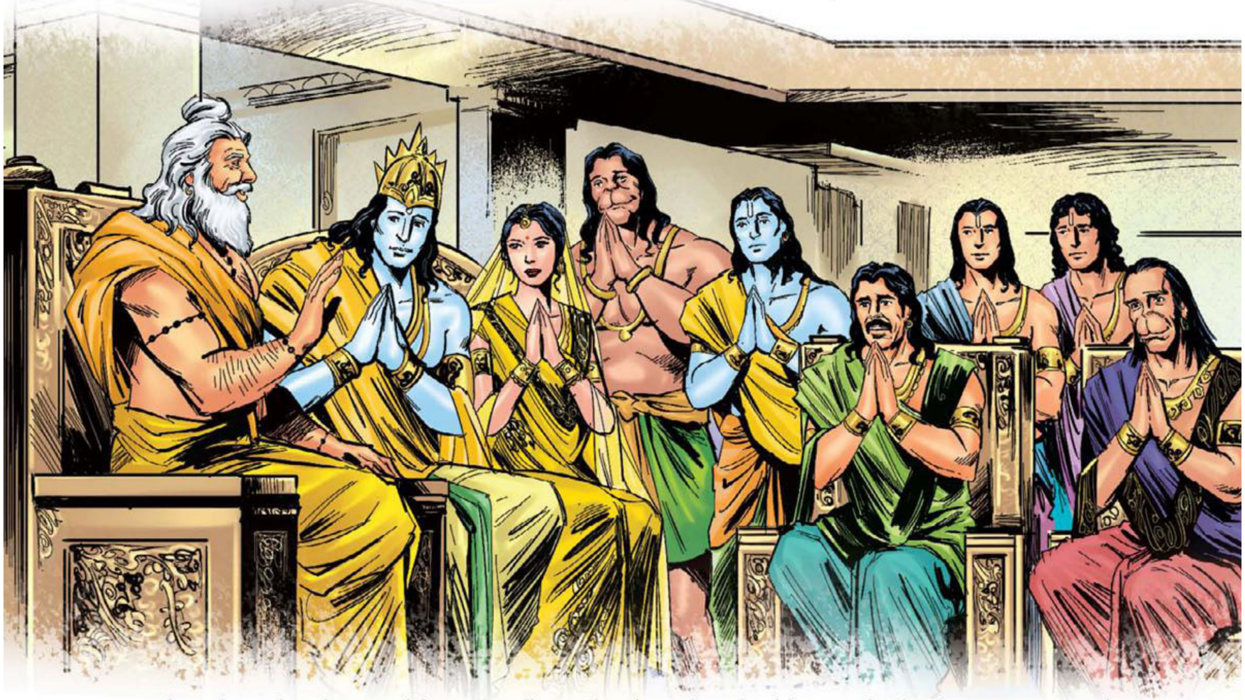
AFTER THE CORONATION OF SRI RAMA, HIS FRIENDS RETURNED TO KISHKINDHA AND LANKA. AS LAKSHMANA DID NOT WANT TO BE THE PRINCE REGENT, RAMA INSTALLED BHARATA IN THAT POSITION. THUS BEGAN RAMA RAJYA, THE GLORIOUS REIGN OF RAMA.



The **Uttara Kand** is the seventh and last book of the Ramayana. Most versions of the Ramayana, including Kamban's Ramavataram and Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas do not contain this kanda. However, it is interesting to read as it concludes the history of Rama. Here is a short summary of the Uttara Kand.

After Rama had regained the kingdom of Ayodhya, all the noble rishis came from the north, south, east and west to rejoice in his victory. Rama asked many questions about past events, and Agastya described Ravana's ancestry from his grandfather, Pulastya, a son of Brahma, to his father Rishi Vishrava, and his mother Kaikasi. He related the stories of Ravana's half-brother Vaishravana (Kubera), of the battles between the rakshasas and devas, of Lanka, of the exploits of Ravana himself, of his brothers Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana, and of his son, the invincible Indrajit.

Rama then wanted to know all about Hanuman. His victory, he said, was due to Hanuman's heroism, intelligence, strength and wisdom. And Agastya related the wonderful story of Hanuman's birth and how he was blessed by the gods with unlimited powers.

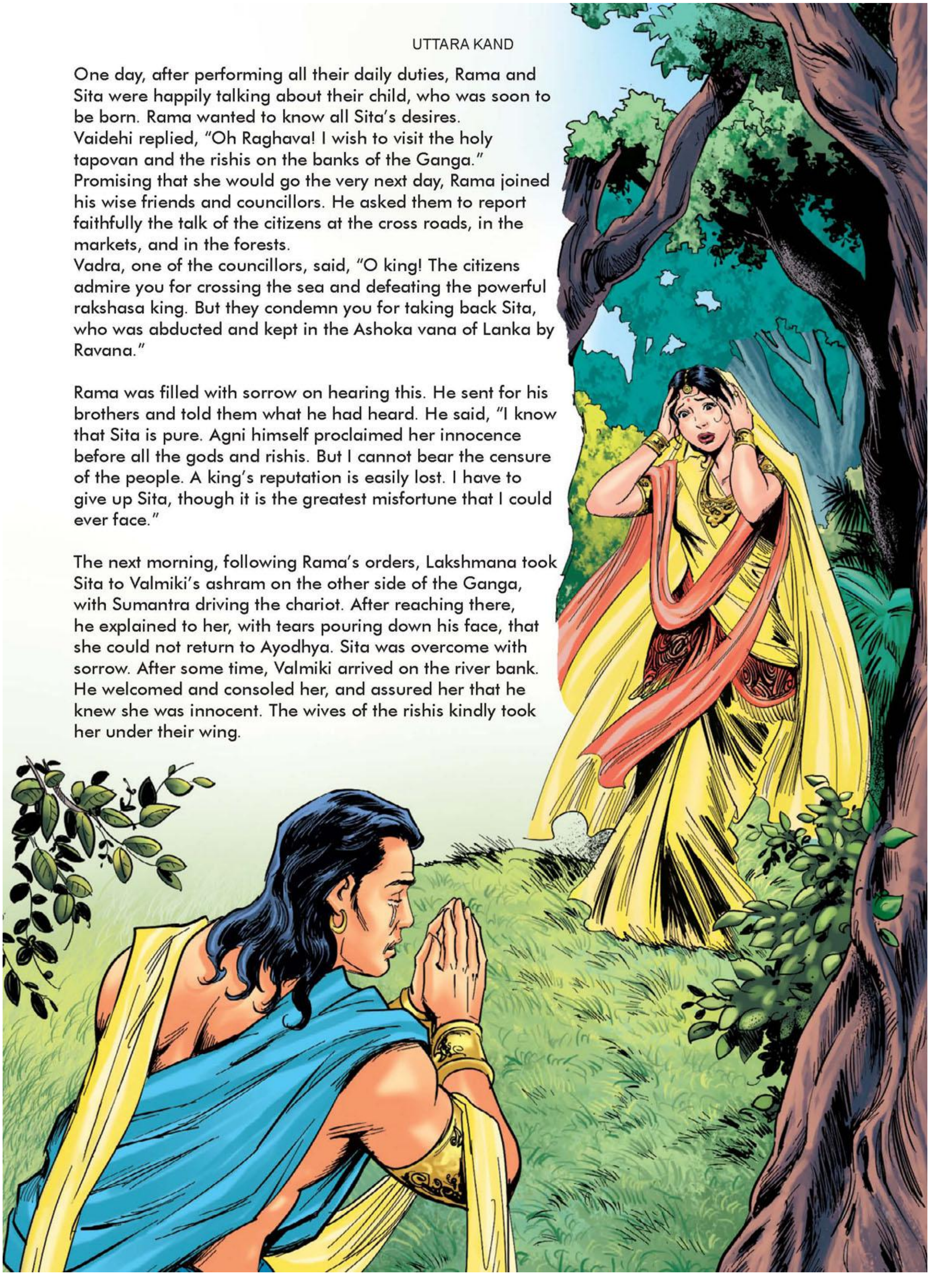


Soon after, the rishis departed from Ayodhya. The three hundred kings who had come to attend the coronation also left, including Janaka of Mithila, Yuddhajit of Kekeya, Sugriva and the vanaras, Vibhishana and the rakshasas, Jambavan and the bears. Hugging his friends, especially Hanuman, with great affection, Rama sent them away loaded with gifts. The Pushpaka Vimana, which had been sent by Rama to Kubera, was returned to him for his use. Rama instructed it to go wherever it wished and to return to him whenever recalled.

One day, after performing all their daily duties, Rama and Sita were happily talking about their child, who was soon to be born. Rama wanted to know all Sita's desires.
Vaidehi replied, "Oh Raghava! I wish to visit the holy tapovan and the rishis on the banks of the Ganga."
Promising that she would go the very next day, Rama joined his wise friends and councillors. He asked them to report faithfully the talk of the citizens at the cross roads, in the markets, and in the forests.
Vadra, one of the councillors, said, "O king! The citizens admire you for crossing the sea and defeating the powerful rakshasa king. But they condemn you for taking back Sita, who was abducted and kept in the Ashoka vana of Lanka by Ravana."

Rama was filled with sorrow on hearing this. He sent for his brothers and told them what he had heard. He said, "I know that Sita is pure. Agni himself proclaimed her innocence before all the gods and rishis. But I cannot bear the censure of the people. A king's reputation is easily lost. I have to give up Sita, though it is the greatest misfortune that I could ever face."

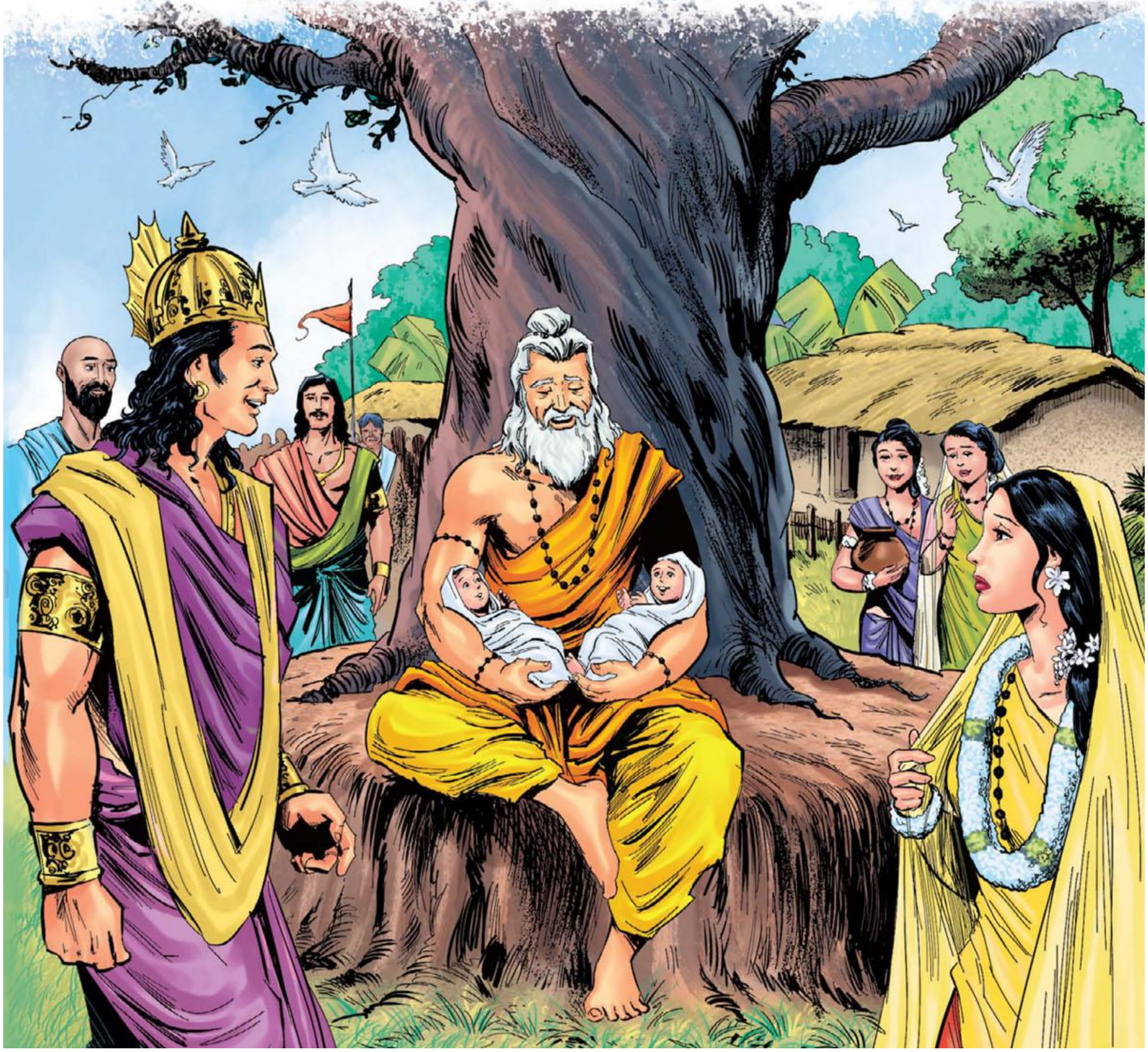
The next morning, following Rama's orders, Lakshmana took Sita to Valmiki's ashram on the other side of the Ganga, with Sumantra driving the chariot. After reaching there, he explained to her, with tears pouring down his face, that she could not return to Ayodhya. Sita was overcome with sorrow. After some time, Valmiki arrived on the river bank. He welcomed and consoled her, and assured her that he knew she was innocent. The wives of the rishis kindly took her under their wing.



Returning to Ayodhya, Lakshmana consoled Rama, who was also heartbroken at the separation from Sita. Taking his brother's advice, Rama decided to concentrate on his work, because a king's first duty is to his citizens. After sharing the stories of various kings, including Nrga, Nimi and Yayaati, he went to the council chamber to hear the grievances of the citizens. These were rare because everyone was healthy and happy and had everything they needed. Rama was always fair to everyone, including animals who were ill treated.

One day, some rishis, headed by Chyavana, son of Bhrgu, came to ask him for protection against the evil Lavana. This rakshasa could not be defeated by anyone because he had an invincible trident, which his father Madhu had got from Lord Shiva through severe tapas. Rama immediately sent Shatrughna with a large army. On the way, Shatrughna spent a night at Valmiki's ashram. On that same night, Sita gave birth to twin sons, bright as the new moon. Shatrughna and all the inmates of the ashram rejoiced, and Valmiki named the boys Lava and Kusha*. The next day, Shatrughna proceeded to the city of Lavana and killed him in battle. At Rama's request, he stayed on as King of Madhura (as the city was called) and established a wonderful kingdom.

**The lower and upper ends of the sacred Kusha grass, respectively*

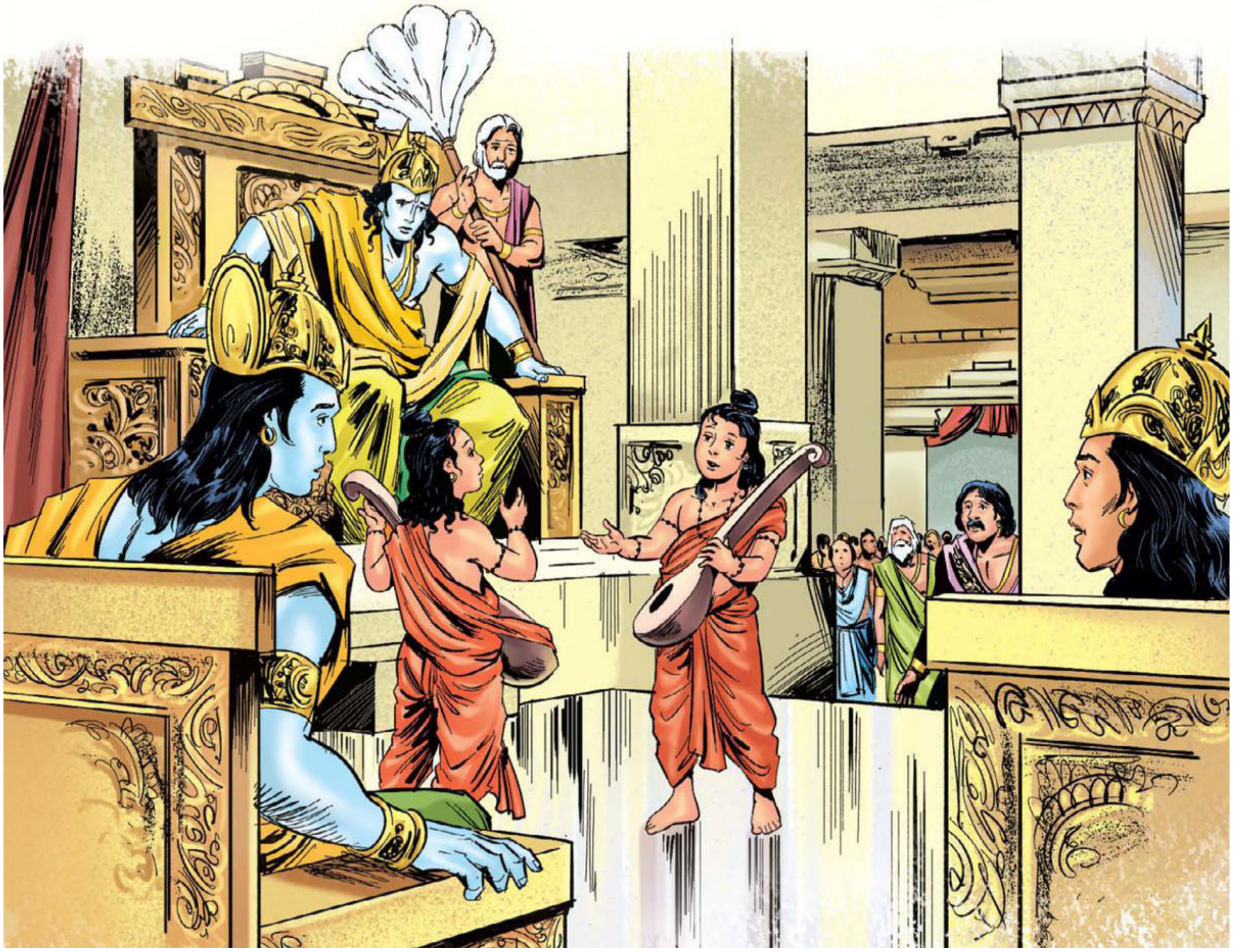


After this, Rama decided to do an Ashwamedha yagna. Bharata and Shatrughna went to make grand preparations for the sacrifice in the holy Naimisha forest on the banks of the Gomati. Meanwhile, Rama let loose a noble horse, which would wander over the country, protected by Lakshmana and the priests. Sugriva and Vibhishana, with their followers, came to help on this grand occasion. Hundreds of kings and great rishis arrived. They stayed in the beautiful mansions built for them, and were honoured and treated with hospitality. The sacrifice went on for more than a year. At all corners stood vanaras and rakshasas liberally distributing clothes, wealth, food, sweets, gems, gold and silver to whoever desired them.

While the sacrifice was going on, Valmiki and his disciples arrived. After Valmiki was honoured by the king and all the assembled rishis and great souls, he sent his two pupils to sing the Ramayana at the homes of the citizens, the byways and the highways. Promising to follow his instructions, the sons of Mythili eagerly went forth.

Valmiki's poem had never been heard before; it was set to music and accompanied by a stringed instrument. During the sacrifice, Rama asked Lava and Kusha to sing for the entire assembly. The audience was entranced by the song and amazed at their resemblance to Rama. When Lava and Kusha completed the first twenty cantos, Rama offered them a reward of 18,000 gold coins, and anything else they wished for. But the two boys said they were forest dwellers, living upon roots and fruits, and had no use for silver and gold.

Rama was filled with curiosity. Lava and Kusha politely answered all his questions about the poem and its author. For many days, Rama and his guests heard that wonderful and holy song. Realizing that Lava and Kusha were the sons of Sita, Rama sent a messenger asking Valmiki to bring Sita to the assembly and proclaim her purity in public.

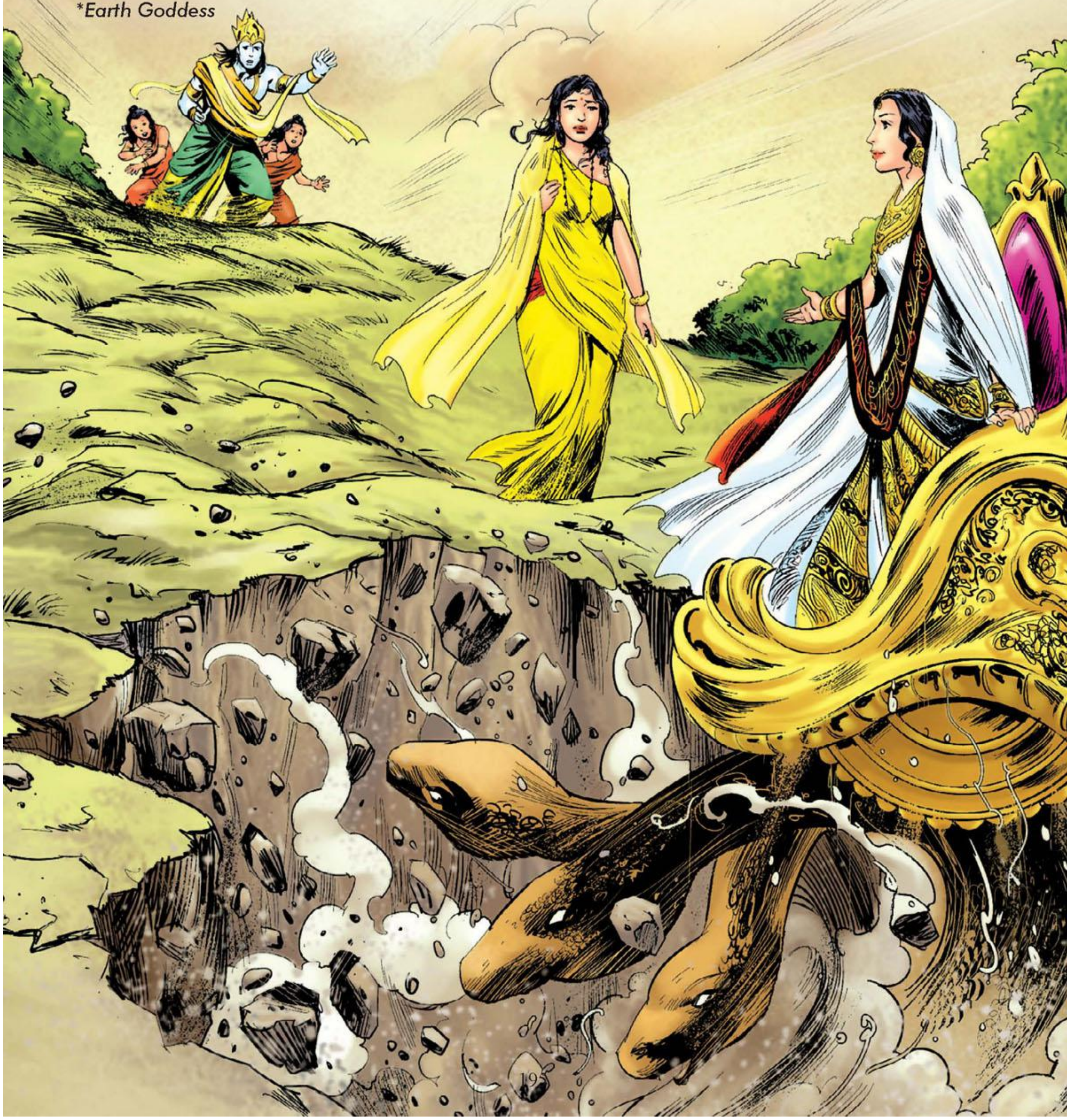


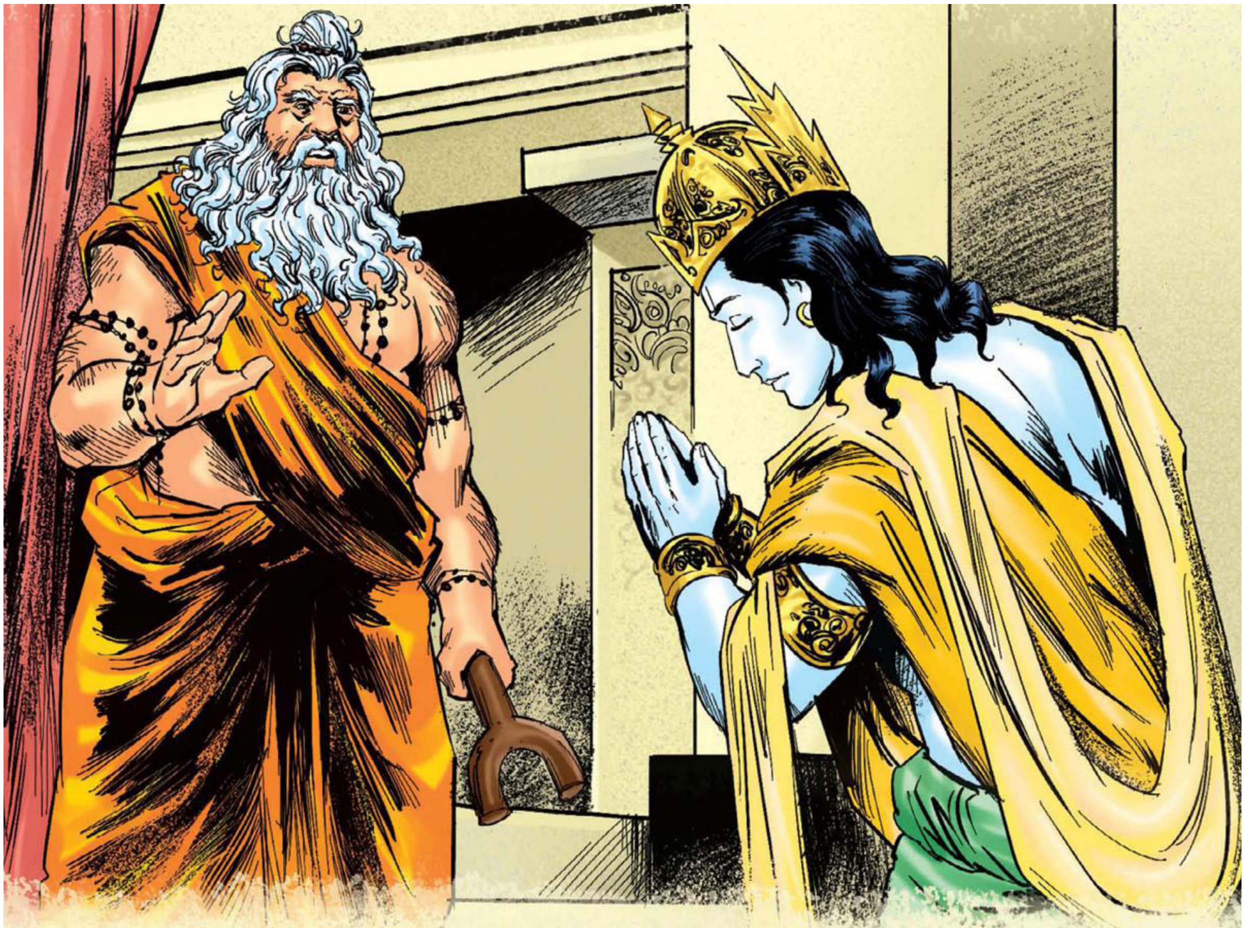
When Sita entered the assembly next morning, the truthful Valmiki, of great spiritual power, proclaimed her innocence. Rama said, 'O holy one, your words give me confidence. It was due to my fear of the people's censure that I forsook her, though I knew she was innocent. Please forgive me. I know that Lava and Kusha are my sons. May my love for Sita be proclaimed before everyone.'

Sita stood with her head bent and eyes full of tears. She said, 'As I have never thought about anyone other than Rama, as I worship Rama in mind, speech and action, may Madhavi Devi* receive me.

At that moment, the goddess appeared on a throne borne by serpents. Taking Sita by the hand, she entered the earth. All the living beings cried out, and the devas rained flowers on Sita.

**Earth Goddess*





Rama was filled with grief and anger. He threatened to destroy the whole earth if Sita was not returned to him. Brahma pacified him, saying, 'Do not grieve. Remember that you are an incarnation. You will be reunited with the pure and noble Sita in heaven'. The next morning, Kusha and Lava sang the Uttara Kanda, the last book of the Ramayana, dealing with future events. After the sacrifice was over and all the guests had left, the sorrowful Rama returned to Ayodhya, treasuring Sita in his heart. He did not marry again; a golden image of Sita served as the queen in every sacrifice. Rama performed thousands of Ashwamedha, Vaajapeya, and other sacrifices, giving generous donations. He ruled over his kingdom righteously. The clouds poured forth rain in time, the harvest was good, and the cities were full of happy, well-fed and long-lived people. After a long time, Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi went to heaven and were happily reunited with Dasharatha.

One day, Yuddhajeet, the king of Kekeya, asked Rama's help in conquering the beautiful territory of the Gandharvas, along the river Sindhu. Rama sent Bharata with his two brave sons Taksha and Pushkala. After conquering the territory, Taksha was established as king of Takshasheela, and Pushkala as king of Pushkalaavati. Similarly, Rama carved out two kingdoms in the Kaarupatha region for Lakshmana's sons, Angada and Chandraketu.

Ten thousand years passed, with the four brothers always striving to serve the citizens righteously. One day, Death appeared at the palace, in the form of a rishi. He told Rama that he wanted to speak to him in private. If anyone heard or saw their conversation, Rama would have to kill him. Rama agreed, and sent Lakshmana outside. Then the rishi said, 'I am your son, Kaala*, the destroyer of all. I bring you this message from Brahma: O Vishnu, lord of the universe, you were born on earth in human form to slay Dashagreeva. Your scheduled stay of eleven thousand years in the mortal world is coming to an end. If you wish to return to heaven, the Devas will be happy.'

**Time*

As Rama smilingly agreed, Rishi Durvasa appeared at the royal gate. He threatened to curse the kingdom and the whole family of Raghu if he was not allowed to see Rama immediately. Hearing those dreadful words, Lakshmana thought, 'If I go to Rama now, only I will be killed; all the others will be saved.'

He fetched Rama, who came hurrying out to see Durvasa. The rishi said he had just completed one thousand years of his tapas and he wanted cooked food. Rama immediately served him food and Durvasa, after eating well, went away praising Rama. Only then did Rama remember the words of Kaala. He was filled with sorrow.

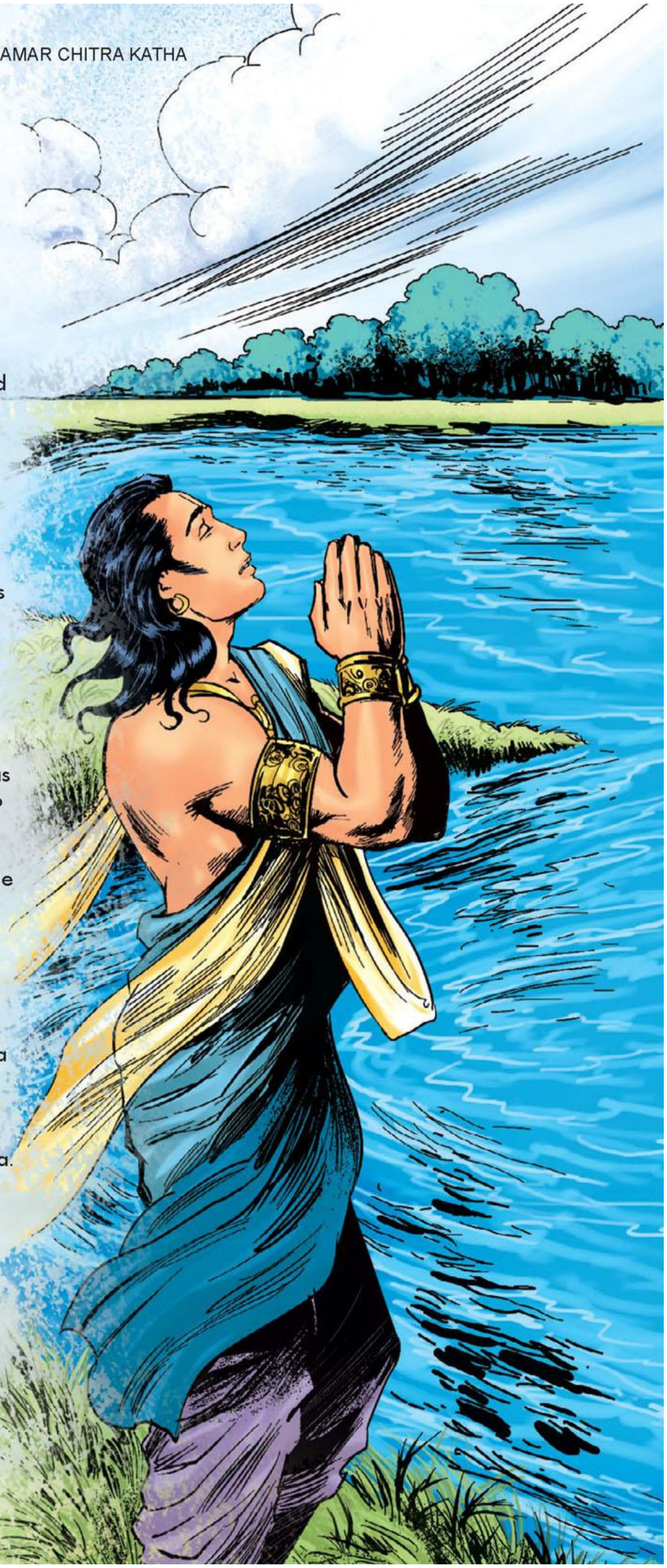
Lakshmana spoke to him sweetly, 'This is but the law of time. Keep your promise and do not grieve for me. For the sake of dharma and out of affection for me, punish me without hesitation.'

After consulting his councillors and priests, Rama renounced his brother, saying that renunciation was the same as destroying a person. Lakshmana went to the bank of the river, stood with joined palms, and stopped breathing. Raining flowers on that heroic scion of Raghu, the devas came and took him to heaven.

The grief-stricken Rama decided to place Bharata on the throne and follow Lakshmana at once. But Bharata and all the citizens pleaded with him to take them along. Seeing their devotion, Rama agreed. He lovingly installed his sons Kusha and Lava as the kings of Kosala and Uttara Kosala respectively.

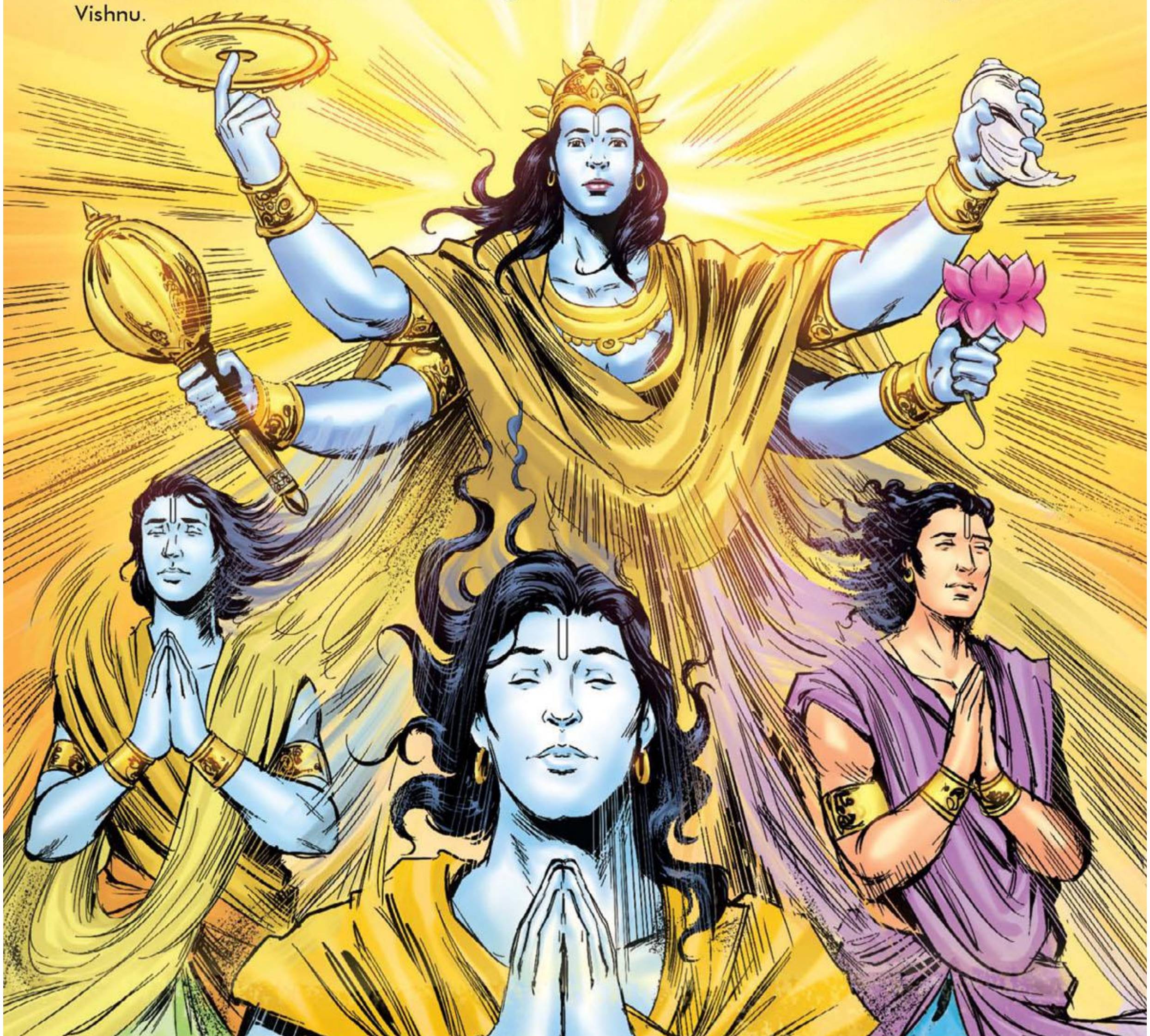
Then he sent a messenger to Shatrughna. Shocked at the news, Shatrughna installed his sons, Subahu and Shatrughati, on the thrones of Madhura and Vidisha respectively, and came straight to Ayodhya.

The vanaras, bears and rakshasas also arrived in great numbers, eager to follow Rama. Rama asked Vibhishana, Hanuman, Jambavan, Mainda and Dwivida to stay on earth until the end of Kali Yuga. All the other vanaras and bears were to go with him.



The next morning, Vasishta performed all the rites of the final departure. Then, preceded by the priests with the brilliant umbrellas of Agnihotra and Vajpeya, the lustrous, lotus eyed Rama walked to the Sarayu, praising the Supreme Brahma. He was followed by all the weapons of destruction, and accompanied by Shri, Mahi, the four Vedas, Gayatri, Omkara and Vashatkara, and all his devotees – Bharata and Shatrughna and their wives, noble rishis and rakshasas, and all the citizens of Ayodhya, young and old, even down to the tiniest animals and birds.

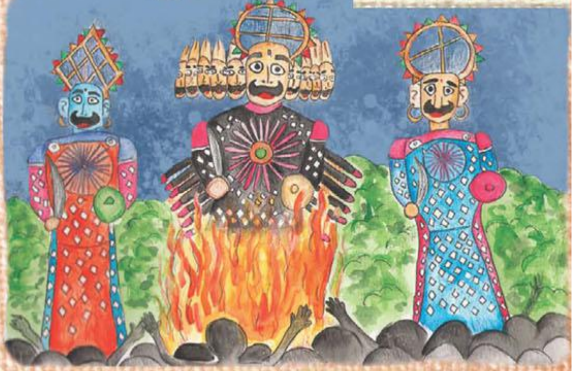
As they approached the river ford at Goprataara, Brahma and the devas came in their shining chariots to receive Rama and his followers. Flowers rained on them all as they ascended to the heavens and were united with their ancestors. To the delight of the Devas, Rama and his brothers merged into Lord Vishnu.



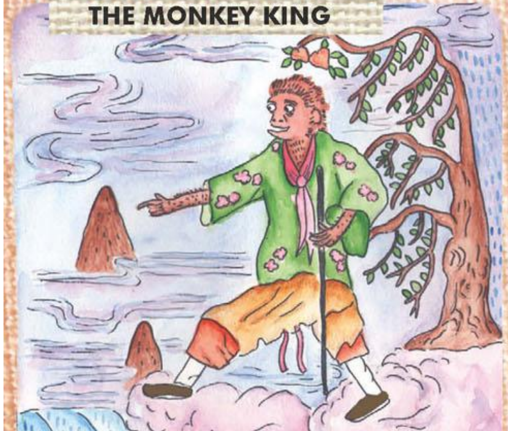
It is said that all who read or hear the Ramayana, even a single shloka of it, will be cleansed of all sins and attain long life, health, happiness, and a place in Brahmaloka.

Many Ramayanas

Valmiki's original Ramayana, composed more than 5000 years ago, has been faithfully preserved. But there were also many translations, adaptations in which characters and events were changed, and also versions in other forms like music, dance, drama, painting, and sculpture. A well known version in North India, which combines dance, drama and music, is the Ram Lila.



RAM LEELA

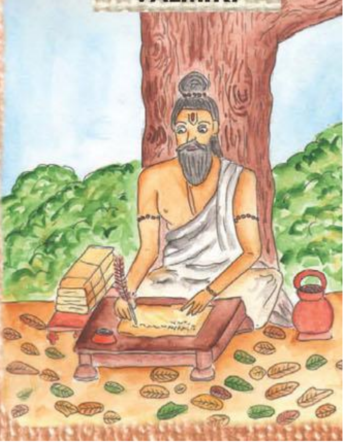


THE MONKEY KING

Almost every country in South and East Asia has some version of the Ramayana, like the Ramakien of Thailand, the Maharadia Lawana of the Philippines, the Reamker of Cambodia, and the Yama Zatdaw of Myanmar. The popular Chinese folk tales about the Monkey King, Sun Wukong, are believed to be based partly on the adventures of Hanuman. Buddhist versions include the Dasaratha Jaataka, and the Phra Lak/ Phra Lam of Laos (Phra Lak is Lakshmana and Phra Lam is Rama). Almost every Indian language has a version of the Ramayana. In some South Indian versions, Ravana is the hero. There is also a set of songs sung by Telugu women, in which the main viewpoint is that of Sita. In these songs, Rama's sister Shanta, defends Sita when Rama is unfair to her.

Listed below are some of the well known versions of the Ramayana in various Indian Languages.

- ***Iramavataram by Kamban (Tamil, 12th Century)***
- ***Ramachandra Charita Purana by Nagachandra (Kannada, 13th Century)***
- ***Katha Ramayana by Madhava Kandali (Assamese, 14th Century)***
- ***Krittivasi Ramayan by Krittibas Ojha (Bengali, 15th Century)***
- ***Ramayanu by Krishnadasa Shama (Goan, 15th Century)***
- ***Ramcharitmanas by Goswami Tulsidas (Awadhi, 16th Century)***
- ***Jagamohan Ramayana by Balaram Das (Oriya, 16th Century)***
- ***Bhavartha Ramayana by Eknath (Marathi, 16th Century)***
- ***Adhyatma Ramayanam Kilipattu by Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan (Malayalam, 16th century)***
- ***Tulsi-Krta Ramayana by Premanand Swami (Gujarati, 17th Century)***
- ***Pothi Ramayana (Urdu, 17th Century).***
- ***Ramavatara Charita (Kashmiri, 19th Century)***



VALMIKI

GLOSSARY

ABHISHEKA अभिषेक Annointing as king

AGASTYA अगस्त्य A great sage

AGNEYASTRA आग्नेयास्त्र Mystic missile presided over by AGNI

AGNI अग्नि God of fire

AGNIKETU अग्निकेतु A warrior in RAVANA's army

AINDREYASTRA ऐन्द्रेयास्त्र A weapon used by LAKSHMANA

AIRAVATA ऐरावत The white elephant who is the vahana of INDRA

AKAMPANA अकम्पनः A general in RAVANA's army

AKSHA अक्षा Son of RAVANA

ANALA अनला Vibhishana's minister

ANGAARA अंगारा Another name for the planet, Mars

ANGADA अंगद Son of VALI and TARA; heir to the throne of KISHKINDHA

ARDHACHANDRA अर्धचन्द्र One of LAKSHMANA's arrows

Angada

ASHOKA VANA अशोकवन A grove of ashoka (saraca asoka) trees

ASHVAMEDHA YAGNA अश्वमेध यज्ञ Horse sacrifice

ASHWIN अश्विन The Ashwini Kumaras are the twin gods of medicine

ASHWINA अश्विना A month in the hindu calendar

ASURA असुर Demons

ATHARVA अथर्व The fourth veda

ATIKAAYA अतिकायः A son of RAVANA

AVATAR अवतार Incarnation

AYODHYA अयोध्या Capital of Kosala

BALARAMA बलराम Elder brother of KRISHNA; sometimes considered the ninth avatar of VISHNU

BALI बाली A king in the treta yuga defeated by the VAMANA avatar

BHALLA भल्ल One of LAKSHMANA's arrows

BHARADWAJA भरद्वाज A sage

BHARATA भरत **RAMA**'s brother

BHEDA भेद Creating conflict within the enemy

BRAHMA ब्रह्मा The Hindu god of creation

BRAHMASTRA ब्रम्हास्त्र A deadly weapon created by **BRAHMA**

BRUHASPATI बृहस्पति Guru of the **DEVAS**

BUDDHA बुद्ध A sage who founded Buddhism; sometimes considered the ninth avatar of VISHNU

CHAITRARATHA चैत्ररथ KUBERA's garden

CHANDRA चन्द्र (1) A mountain on which life-saving herbs grow (2) the moon god

CHITRAKOOTA चित्रकूट A beautiful hill near the river Mandakini

DAANA दान Gifts

DADIMUKHA दधिमुख A heroic old VANARA; the son of SOMA

DANAVA दानव A race of RAKSHASAS

DANDAKA दण्डक A forest that lies near the river Yamuna

DASHARATHA दशरथ King of AYODHYA, father of RAMA.

DEVA देव God

DEVAANTAKA देवन्तक A son of RAVANA

DHAANYAMALINI धान्यमालिनी RAVANA's wife

DHARMA धर्म Morality

DHOOMRAKSHA धूम्रक्ष A RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

DHRUVA ध्रुव The pole star

DHUMRA धूम्र Lord of the bears who lives on Mt. RIKSHAVAN; JAMBAVAN's brother

DIVASAKARAM दिवसकरम Another name for SURYA

DOOSHANA दूषण RAVANA's brother who was killed by RAMA

DRONA द्रोण A mountain on which life-saving herbs grow

DRUMAKULYA द्रुमकुल्य A holy place being terrorised by a wicked robber called ABHIRAS

DURDHARA दुर्धर A top general in RAVANA's army

DURMUKHA दुर्मुख A vanara created by BRAHMA

DWIVIDA द्विविद An immortal vanara, son of Ashwini kumaras

GADGADA गदगद DHUMRA and JAMBAVAN's father

GAJA गजः A mighty VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

GANDHAMAADANA गन्धमादनः A mighty VANARA who is the son of YAMA

GANDHARVA गन्धर्व Celestial musicians

GANGA गंगा A sacred river that rises in the Himalayas and flows into the bay of Bengal

GARUDA गरुड (1) The vehicle of Vishnu (2) A formation of an army

GAVAKSHA गवक्षः A mighty VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

GAVAYA गवयः A mighty VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

GOLANGULA गोलान्गूला Long-tailed, black-faced VANARA

GOMATI गोमती A river in North India

GUHA गुहः The ruler of the Nishada territory

HANUMAN हनुमान A VANARA. Son of Vayu and Anjana. Minister to SUGRIVA

HAYAGREEVA हयग्रीव A god worshipped on Mt. Meru

HEMAKUTA हेमकूट A VANARA who is the son of VARUNA

HIMALAYA हिमालय A mountain range in North India

HINAGREEVA हीनग्रीव One without a neck

HIRANYAKASHIPU हिरण्यकशिपु An evil king in the Satya yuga who was killed by NARASIMHA

HIRANYAKSHA हिरण्यक्ष A RAKSHASA in the satya yuga who was defeated by VARAHA

IKSHVAKU इक्ष्वाकु The earliest ancestor of the Suryavansha kings, the dynasty to which RAMA belonged, and after whom it is named.

INDRA इंद्र King of gods

INDRAJIT इन्द्रजीत Son of RAVANA

JAMADAGNI जमदग्नि A rishi; father of PARASURAMA

JAMBAVAN जाम्बवान The king of the bears and DHUMRA's brother

JAMBU जम्बू Jamun tree

Indrajit

JAMBUMAALI जम्बुमाली Son of PRAHASTA

JANAKA जनक King of MITHILA, father of SITA

JANASTHANA जनस्थान A sacred place that was once terrorised by RAKSHASAS

JATAYU जटायु Friend of DASHARATHA and ally of RAMA

JYOTIRMUKHA ज्योतिर्मुख A VANARA who is the son of SURYA

KAALA काल Time

KABANDHA कबंध A RAKSHASA who was cursed by a RISHI and freed by RAMA

KADRU कद्रु Daughter of Daksha Prajapati and mother of the NAGAS

KAIKASI कैकसी RAVANA's mother

KAIKEYI कैकेयी DASHARATHA's youngest wife, BHARATA's mother.

KAILASHA कैलाश A mountain on which KUBERA's palace stands

KALKI कल्कि The tenth avatar of VISHNU who is supposed to appear in the Kali yuga

KAMPANA कम्पन A powerful RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

KAMSA कंस A wicked king killed by KRISHNA

KANCHANA कान्चन Another name for Mt. Sumeru

KANDU कण्डु A wise rishi

KARNI कर्णि One of LAKSHMANA's arrows

KARTAVIRYA ARJUNA कर्तवीर्य अर्जुन A king who was killed by PARASURAMA

KARTIKEYA कार्तिकेय Son of Shiva, and commander of the divine armies

KAUSALYA कौसल्या DASHARATHA's chief queen, mother of RAMA

KESARI केसरी (1) A VANARA in SUGRIVA's army who lives on Mt. KRAUNCHA (2) Father of HANUMAN

KHARA खर A powerful man-eating RAKSHASA, and the brother of RAVANA. He was killed by RAMA

KIMĪDIN कीमिदिन A creature that causes diseases according to the Atharva veda

KINNARA किन्नर A celestial musician

KISHKINDHA किषकिंधा The VANARA kingdom

KRATHANA क्रथन The VANARA son of VISRAVASA who sits under the JAMBU tree

KRAUNCHA क्रौंच A mountain where lord KARTIKEYA made a gap with his javelin

KRIMI कृमि An organism that causes diseases according to the Atharva veda

KRISHNA कृष्ण The eighth avatar of VISHNU who appeared in the Dwapara yuga

KSHATRIYA क्षत्रिय Class of people, traditionally engaged in the military arts

KSHURA क्षुर One of LAKSHMANA's arrows

KUBERA कुबेर God of wealth

KUMBHA कुम्भ A mighty RAKSHASA; son of KUMBHAKARNA

KUMBHAKARNA कुम्भकर्ण Brother of RAVANA

KUMUDA कुमुद A VANARA king from a country on the banks of the river GOMATI

KURMA कुर्मा The second avatar of VISHNU who appeared in the form of a tortoise during the Satya yuga

KUSHA कुश Son of SITA and RAMA

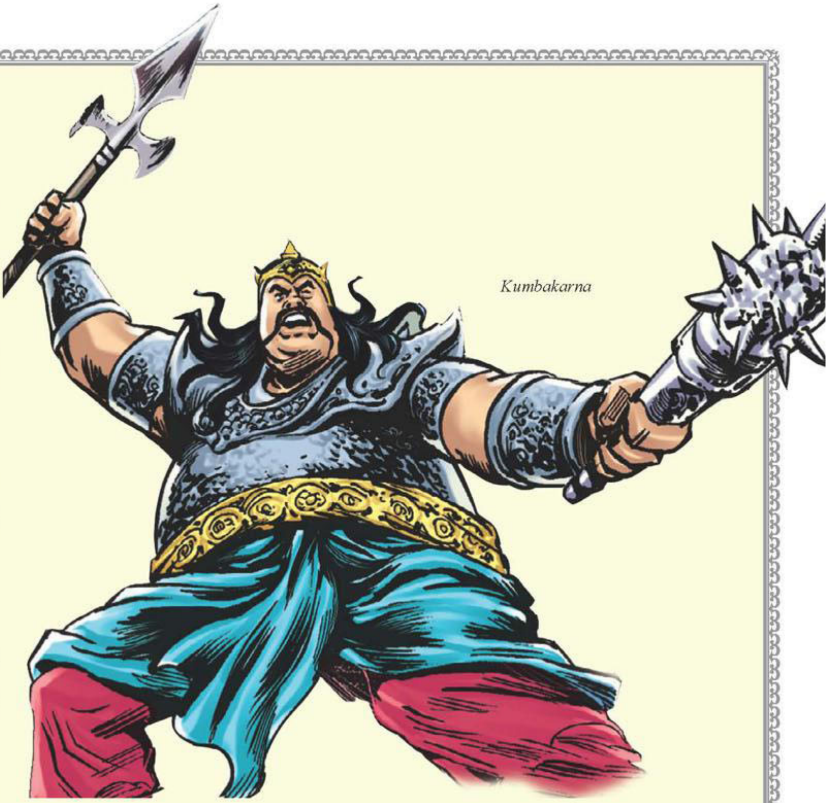
LAKSHMANA लक्ष्मण Brother of RAMA, son of SUMITRA

LAKSHMI लक्ष्मी Goddess of fortune

LANKA लंका RAVANA's kingdom

LAVA लव Son of SITA and RAMA

Lanka



Kumbakarna

MAALYAVAAN माल्यवान A mountain on which KESARI lived

MARICHA मरीच A RAKSHASA who helped RAVANA kidnap SITA

MAATALI मातलि INDRA's charioteer

MAHABHARATA महाभारत A war fought during the Dwapara yuga

MAHAPAARSHWA महापार्श्व A general in RAVANA's army

MAHENDRA महेन्द्र A big mountain from where HANUMAN leapt towards LANKA

MAHODARA महोदर A general in RAVANA's army

MAINAKA मैनाक A winged mountain that resided under the sea

MAINDA मैन्द An immortal VANARA, son of Ashwini Kumaras

MAKARAAKSHA मकराक्ष Son of KHARA

MALAYA मलय A mountain

MANDARA मन्दर A mountain where PRAMATHI lives

MANDODARI मन्दोदरी RAVANA's wife

MANIBHADRA मणिभद्रः KUBERA's general

MANU मनु The first human; saved by MATSYA during the Satya yuga

MARANAM मरणम Death

MATSYA मत्स्य The first avatar of VISHNU who appeared in the form of a fish during the Satya yuga

MATTA मत्त A powerful RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

MERU मेरु A mythological mountain

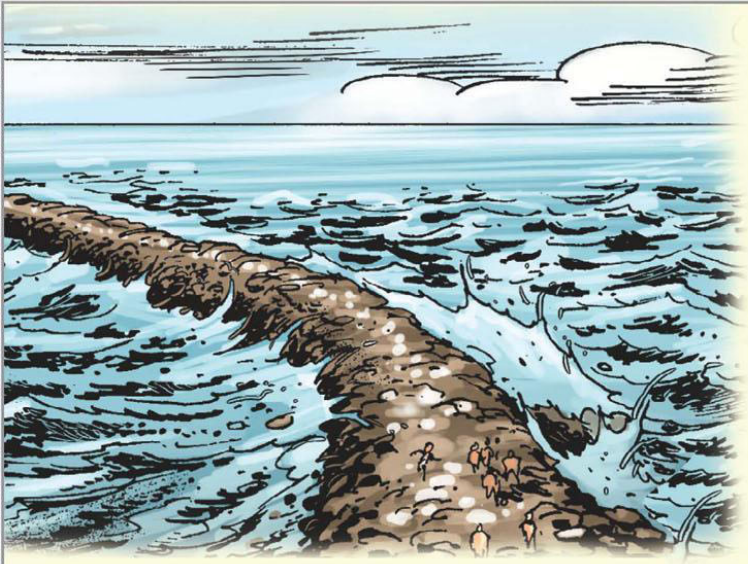
MITHILA मिथिला Kingdom of JANAKA

MOOLA मूल Stars connected with the RAKSHASAS

MRITYULOKAM मृत्युलोकम World of the dead

MRUTASANJEEVANI मृतसंजीवनी A herb for restoring the dead to life

MYTHILI मैथिलि Princess of MITHILA. Another name for SITA.



Nala Setu

NAGA नाग A mythical being who is part human and part snake

NALA नल A VANARA who built the bridge across the sea to lanka

NALA SETU नलसेतु The bridge built on the ocean to Lanka by NALA

NANDAKA नंदका VISHNU's sword

NANDIGRAMA नन्दिग्राम A village near AYODHYA

NARAANTAKA नरान्तक Son of RAVANA

NARASIMHA नरसिम्ह The fourth avatar of VISHNU who was half-man, half-lion

NARAYANA नारायण Another name for VISHNU

NARMADA नर्मदा A river in central India

NIKUMBHA निकुम्भ A mighty RAKSHASA; son of KUMBHAKARNA

NIKUMBHILA निकुम्भिला A goddess worshipped by the RAKSHASAS

NILA नील A strong VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

NIRRTI निर्त्ति Ancestor of the RAKSHASAS

OSHADIPARVATAM औषधिपर्वतम A mountain covered with medicinal plants

PAAVAKAHA पावकः Another name for the god of fire

PAMPA पम्पा A lake near CHITRAKOOT

PANASA पनस (1) VIBHISHANA's minister
(2) A VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

PANCHAVATI पचंवटी A peaceful place in the DANDAKA forest, where RAMA, SITA and LAKSHMANA spent part of their exile

PARASURAMA परशुराम The sixth avatar of VISHNU who appeared in the Treta yuga to avenge the death of his father

PATAALA पाताल Underworld

PRAGHASA प्रघस One of RAVANA's top five generals

PRAHASTA प्रहस्त One of RAVANA's ministers

PRAHLADA प्रहलाद The son of HIRANYAKASHIPU; a great devotee of VISHNU

PRAJANGHA प्रजघ्ङ्घ A powerful RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

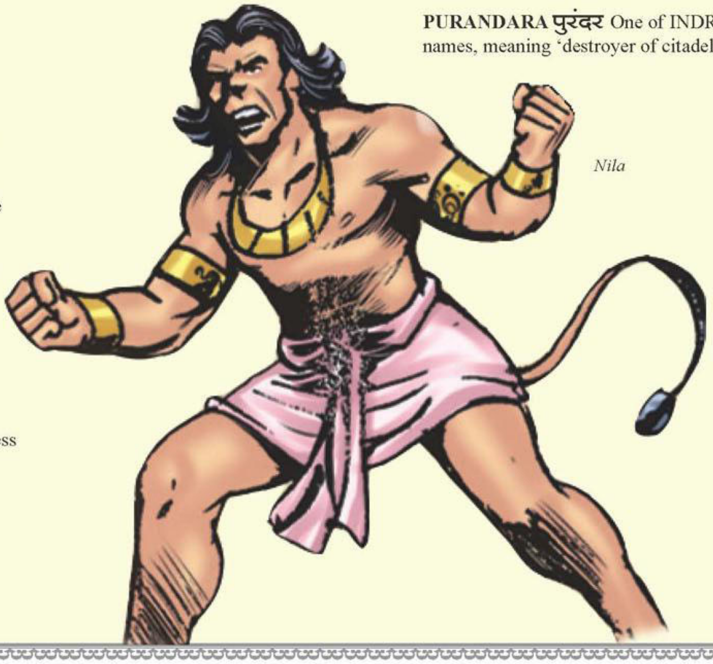
PRAMATHI प्रमाथी A VANARA who lives in the caves of Mt MANDARA and Mt USHEERABEEJA

PRAMATI प्रमति VIBHISHANA's minister

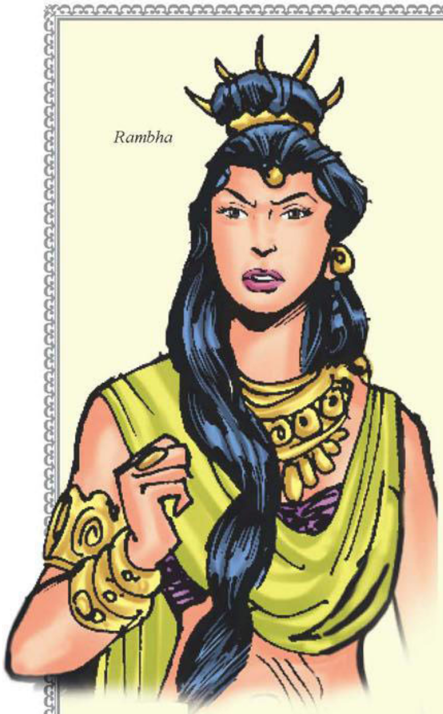
PRATAPANA प्रतापना A RAKSHASA blinded by Nala

PUNJIKASTHALA पुञ्जिकस्थला An apsara

PURANDARA पुरंदर One of INDRA's names, meaning 'destroyer of citadels'



Nila



Rambha

PUSHPAKA VIMANA पुष्पक विमान RAVANA's flying golden chariot

PUSHYA पुष्य A constellation

RAGHAVA राघव The clan to which RAMA belonged

RAGHU रघु An ancestor of RAMA

RAKSHASA राक्षस The male members of the RAKSHASA race

RAMA राम Prince of AYODHYA. Son of KAUSALYA and DASHARATHA

RAMA RAJYA राम राज्य The reign of RAMA

RAMBHA रम्भा An apsara

RASATALA रसातल One of the underworlds

RASHMIKETU रश्मिकेतु A RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

RAUDRASTRA रौद्रस्त्र Missile presided over by RUDRA

RAVANA रावण The ten-headed king of LANKA

RIKSHARAJA ऋक्षराज Father of VALI and SUGRIVA

RIKSHAVAN रिक्शावन A mountain where DHUMRA lives

RISHABHA ऋषभ (1) A large mountain with a golden peak (2) a VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

RISHI ऋषि A holy man

RISHYAMUKHA ऋश्यमूक A hill where SUGRIVA takes refuge from VALI

ROHINI रोहिणी A star

RTADHAAMA ऋतधामा Among the vasus, RTADHAAMA is the abode of truth.

RUDRA रुद्र The 11 rudras are Aditi's sons

SAAMA साम Friendly persuasion

SAAVARNYAKARANI सावर्ण्यकरणी A herb that grows on the southern peak of Mahodaya mountain

SADHYA साध्य The twelve SADHYAS are a class of divine beings

SAGARA सगर God of the sea

SAHYA सह्य A mountain near KISHKINDHA

SAMDHAANI संधानी A herb that grows on the southern peak of Mahodaya mountain

SAMJIVAKARANI संजीवकरणी A herb that grows on the southern peak of Mahodaya mountain

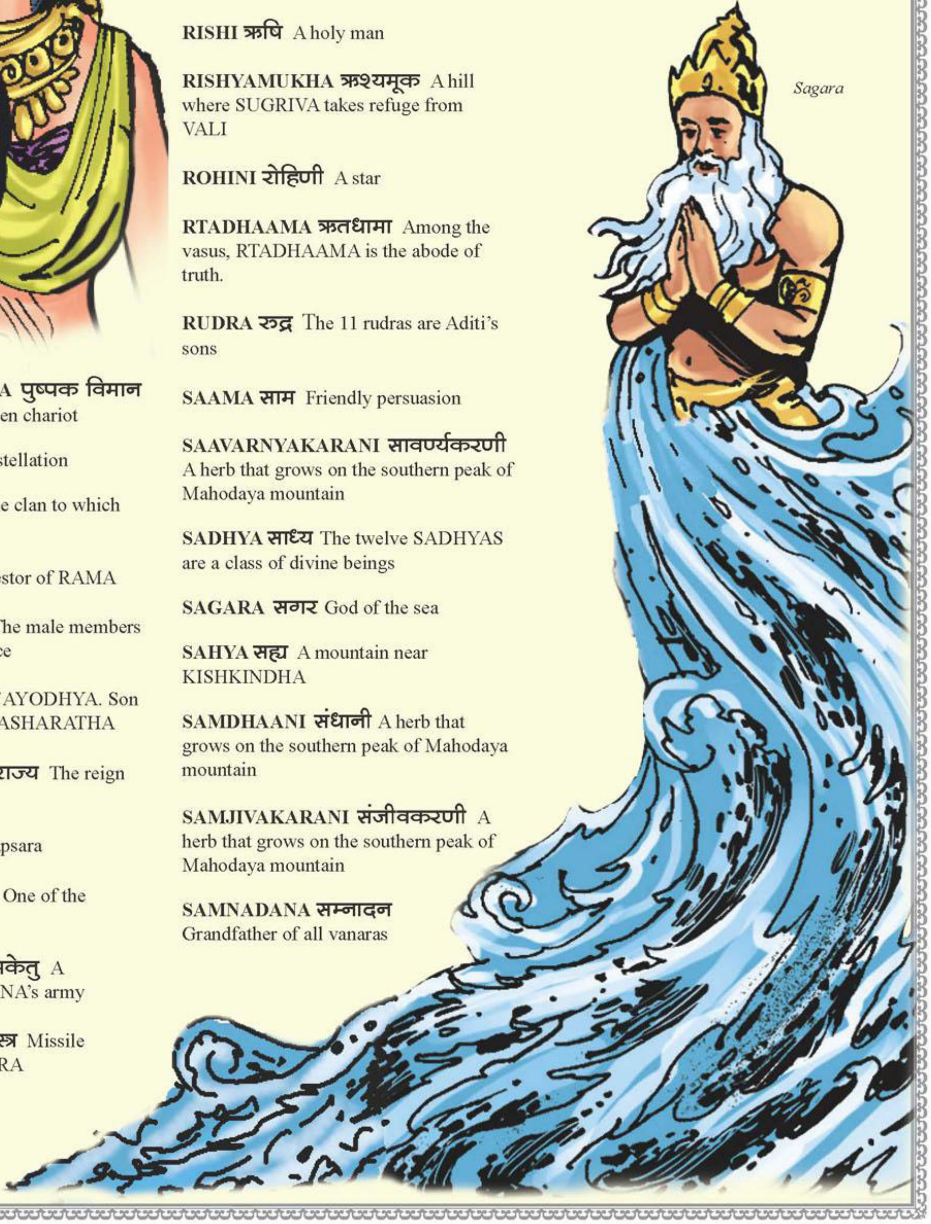
SAMNADANA सम्नादन Grandfather of all vanaras

SAMROCHANA संरोचन A mountain where KUMUDA lives

SANDHANI सन्धानी A herb for joining severed limbs and fractures

SAPTARSHI सप्तर्षि A constellation made of seven stars

SARABHA शरभ A VANARA; YAMA's son who lives on the mountain SHAALVEYA



Sagara

Sarama

SARAMA सरमा A rakshasi who had been ordered by RAVANA to guard SITA, and had become her friend. Some scholars believe she was VIBHISHANA's wife.

SARANA सरना A RAKSHASA spying for RAVANA

SARANGA शार्ङ्ग The bow of VISHNU

SAURAMASTRA सौरमस्त्र A weapon used by ATIKAAYA

SHAALVEYA साल्वेय A mountain where SARABHA lives

SHABARI शबरी A pious lady who lived in an ashram in the forest and met RAMA

SHARANA शरणा A heroic RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

SHARDOOLA शार्दूल A RAKSHASA spy

SHATAGHNI शतघ्न्य A large club with iron spikes, supposed to kill hundreds of enemies with one blow

SHATRUGHNA शत्रुघ्न Son of SUMITRA; twin of LAKSHMANA

SHUKA शुक A heroic RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

SHURPANAKA शूर्पणखा RAVANA's sister

SHWETA श्वेत A VANARA; son of SURYA

SITA सीता Princess of MITHILA and RAMA's wife. Also an avatar of LAKSHMI.

SOMA सोम The moon god

SONITAAKSHA शोणिताक्ष A powerful rakshasa in RAVANA's army

SOUMITRA सौमित्रा Son of SUMITRA. Another name for LAKSHMANA.

SUDARSHAN CHAKRA सुर्दशन चक्र VISHNU's primary weapon

SUGRIVA सुग्रीव A VANARA; VALI's brother; king of KISHKINDHA

SUMITRA सुमित्रा DASHARATHA's second queen. Mother of the twins LAKSHMANA and SHATRUGHNA.

SUMUKHA सुमुख A member of SUGRIVA's army, created by BRAHMA

SUPARSHWA सुपार्श्व An intelligent minister of RAVANA

SUPTAGHNA सुप्तघ्न A RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

SURYA सूर्य Sun god

SUSHENA सुषेणः Father of TARA and a VANARA in SUGRIVA's army

SUVARNAKARANI सौवर्णकरणी A herb for restoring the skin

SUVELA सुवेल A mountain near LANKA

TAPAS तपस्य The practice of deep meditation and austerities to achieve spiritual power

TARA तारा Wife of VALI

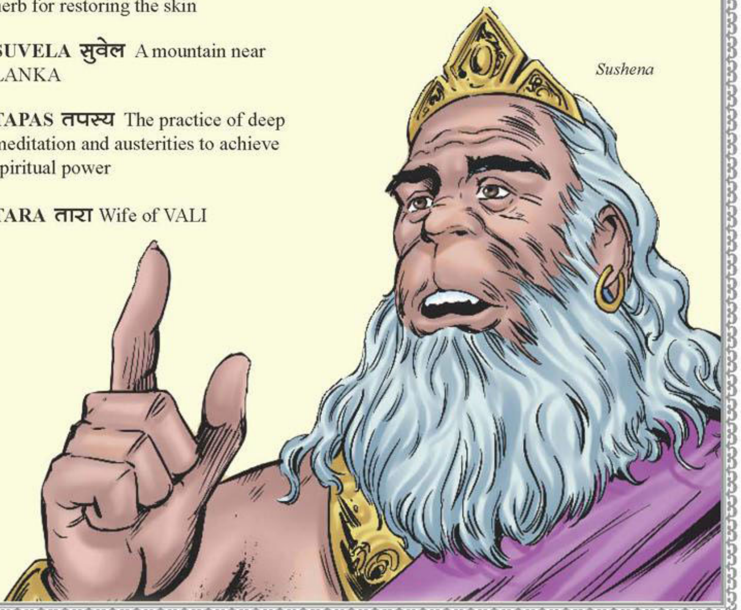
Shardoola

TARANAM तरणम A crossing

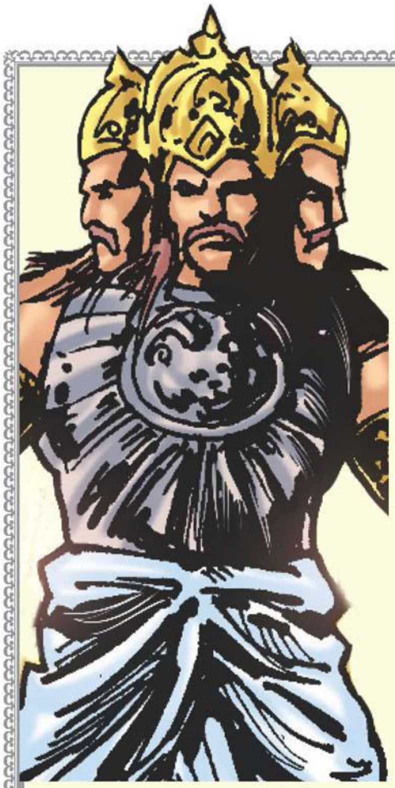
TRIJATA त्रजट An aged rakshasi in the ASHOKA VANA

TRIKUTA त्रिकूट The hill on which LANKA is situated

TRISHANKU त्रिशन्कु A star connected with the IKSHVAKU dynasty



Sushena



Trishira

TRISHIRA त्रिशिरा Son of RAVANA

TWASHTA त्वस्त् A missile used by ATIKAAYA

USHEERABEEJA उशीरबीज A mountain where PRAMATHI lives

VAIDEHI वैदेही Another name for SITA

VAIVASWATA MANU वैवस्वत मनु RAMA's ancestor

VAJRADAMSHTRA वज्रदंष्ट्र A heroic RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

VALI वाली A VANARA; SUGRIVA's brother; king of KISHKINDHA

VALMIKI वाल्मीकि Author of the Ramayana

VAMANA वामन The fifth avatar of VISHNU who appeared in the form of dwarf to defeat BALI

VANARA वानर VANARAS were the strong, apelike children of the DEVAS

VARAHA वराह The third avatar of VISHNU who appeared as a boar to defeat HIRANYAKSHA

VARUNA वरुण Lord of all waters

VASISHTHA वसिष्ठ Family priest in the court of DASHARATHA

VASU वासु The 8 vasus are Aditi's sons

VAYAVYASTRA वायव्यास्त्र Missile presided over by Vayu

VEDA वेद Ancient Indian texts

VEENA वीणा A musical instrument which RAVANA played proficiently

VEERYAVAAN वीर्यवान Another name for VISHNU

VEGADARSHI वेगदर्शी A member of SUGRIVA's army, created by BRAHMA

VIBHISHANA विभीषण RAVANA's brother

VIDHUJJIVA विद्युज्जिह्व A magician in LANKA

VIHARA विहार VANARA commanders under SARABHA's command

VIRAADHA विराधः A flesh-eating RAKSHASA who lived in the DANDAKA forest

VIRUPAAKSHA विरूपाक्ष One of RAVANA's top five generals

VIRUPAKSHA विरूपक्ष A RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

VISHAKHA विशाख A star connected with the IKSHVAKU dynasty

VISHALYAKARANI विशल्यकरणी A herb for extracting arrows and spears, and for healing wounds

VISHNU विष्णु The preserver of the universe

VISHWAKARMA विश्वकर्मा Architect of the gods

VISRAVASA वैश्रवसा Father of KRATHANA

YAJNAKOPA यज्नकोप A RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

YAJNASHATRU यज्ञशत्रु A heroic RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

YAKSHA यक्ष Male nature spirits

YAMA यम God of death and justice

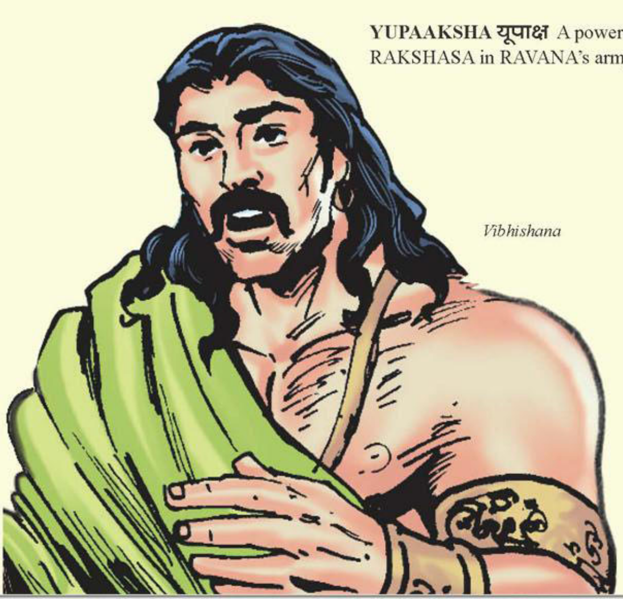
YAMAASTRA यमास्त्र A weapon used by ATIKAAYA

YATUDHNA यातुधान An organism that causes diseases according to the Atharva veda

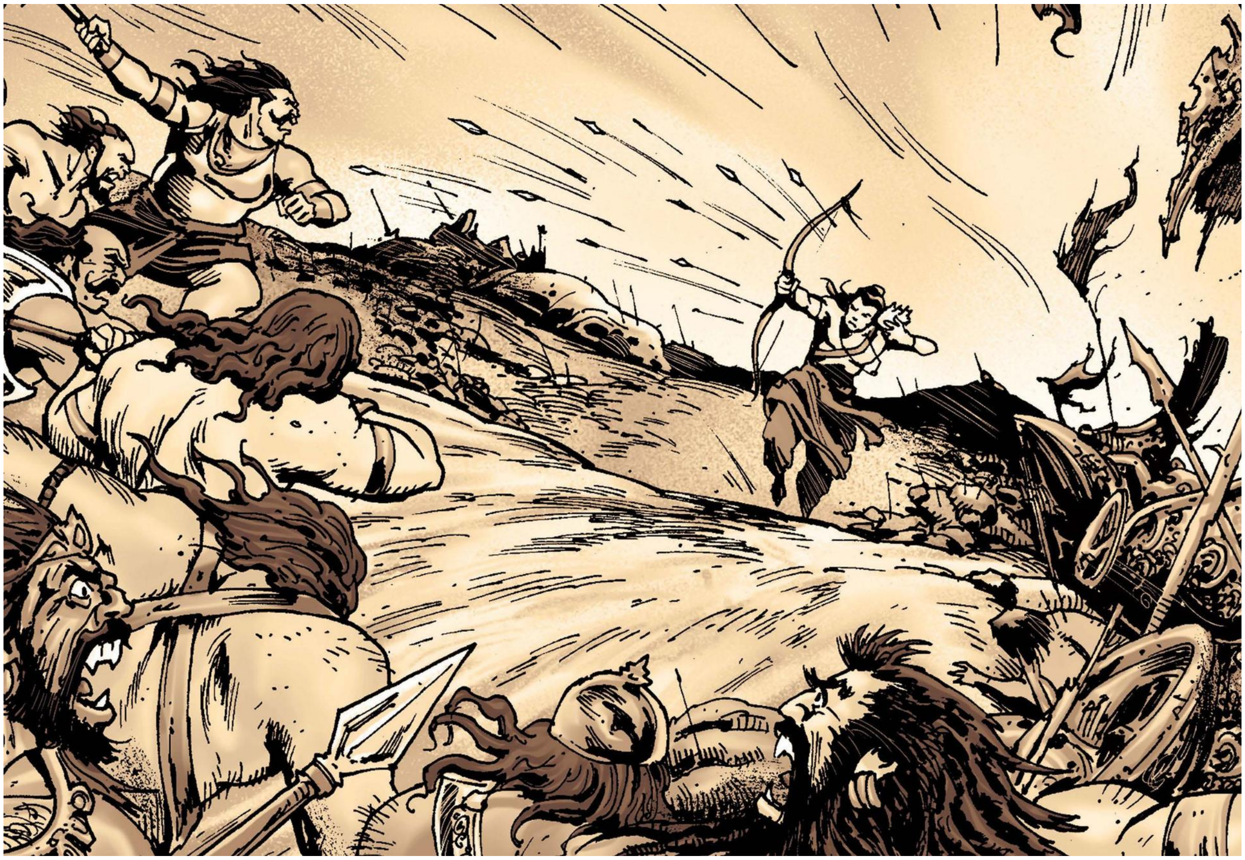
YOJANA योजन A distance of about ten kilometres

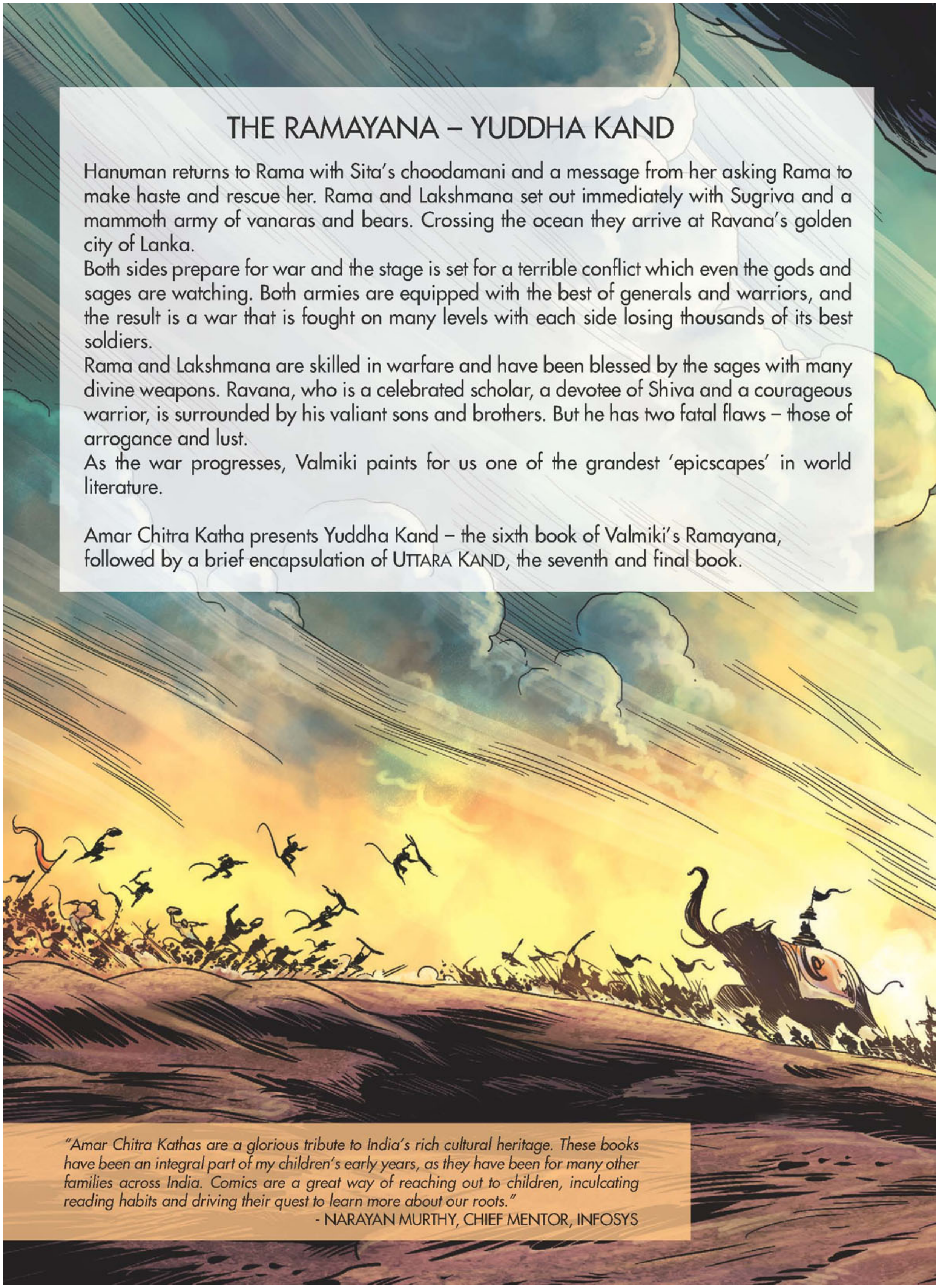
YUDDHONMATTA युद्धोन्मत्त A powerful RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army

YUPAAKSHA यूपाक्ष A powerful RAKSHASA in RAVANA's army



Vibhishana





THE RAMAYANA – YUDDHA KAND

Hanuman returns to Rama with Sita's choodamani and a message from her asking Rama to make haste and rescue her. Rama and Lakshmana set out immediately with Sugriva and a mammoth army of vanaras and bears. Crossing the ocean they arrive at Ravana's golden city of Lanka.

Both sides prepare for war and the stage is set for a terrible conflict which even the gods and sages are watching. Both armies are equipped with the best of generals and warriors, and the result is a war that is fought on many levels with each side losing thousands of its best soldiers.

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* * *

BALA KAND

AYODHYA KAND

ARANYA KAND

KISHKINDHA KAND

SUNDARA KAND

YUDDHA KAND
with Uttara Kand

* * *

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